CHRIST'S COMMUNION WITH HIS CHURCH MILITANT.

First Preached, and now Published for the good of Gods Church in generall.

BY
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Master of Arts.

Cant. 1. 13. *A bundle of Myrrhe is my Welbeloved unto me, hee shall lye all night betwixt my breasts.*

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TO

The vertuous Lady Aunt,

SUSAN CECILL,

Grace and Peace be multiplyed

BY

JESUS CHRIST.

Madame:

THe *ſweet taſte I have had of your Ladyſhips love to the beſt things, hath encouraged mee, humbly to preſent this little tract unto you. What* Salomon *ſpeaks from experience, that you upon triall have found true,* That the moſt promiſing contents of this life, are vanity and vexation of Spirit. *Our wiſe and mercifull Father doth uſually thus imbitter the ſweeteſt things of this*

world to us, that wee may the more cordially relish, and fervently seeke after that full satisfying, and everlasting sweetnesse and comfort, which is in Communion with CHRIST *our heavenly husband, in whom all fulnesse of consolation dwels. A drop of this transcendent fulnesse your Ladyship (I hope) shal find distilled into your soul, by reading this little work now come to your hands, which like* Aquavitæ, *shall cheere and revive your sad spirit, when ready to faint. Fainting persons, carry little bottles of reviving liquids, alwayes about them; if your Ladyship shall think fit, to make this little tract your pocket-Companion, and peruse a little of it still, when you feele soule-qualmes to seize upon you; you shall find (I trust) through the blessing of Christ, much ease and comfort; and so spend and end your aged dayes, in more true solace of heart, than yet you have done your primest dayes of flourishing youth. The ac-*

com-

compliſhing of this, is the ſincere and holy ayme of your much obliged Nephew, in this his firſt offering to publike view. Which ſimple aime, that the Lord may graciouſly anſwer to your Ladyſhips comfort here, and eternall happineſse hereafter, I ſhall ſtill continue my pray[er] (though here I end my Epiſtle) that t[he] Lord will ſtill attend this my poore en[de]avour with his rich bleſſing to all t[he] partakers thereof, and in ſpeciall to You.

Your much obliged Neph[ew]

NICH: LOCKYER

Chri-

Christian Reader.

COmmunion with CHRIST, hee is our happineſſe in this world and in the world to come: that which makes every ſweet thing ſweet, and every ſweet thing ſweeter. With this ſweet ſubject is this little Tract now come to thy hand, taken up. Poore fallen man is ſtill complaining of one want or other; and when the thing is given which he longed for, yet his Soule is as farre from content, as before; like to a Child that cries for this and that, and yet when hee hath what he cryed for, continues crying ſtill, and cannot tell well what hee would have. All our want is this, the want of Communion with Chriſt: this is the cauſe of all complaints; the infelicity of the ſoul, the ſum of Mans miſery, here and hereafter; but poor blind man ſees it not, and therefore complaines of twenty things, twenty miles a this ſide his diſeaſe; and ſo ſpends [illegible]yes in labour and ſorrow, and yet looſes

looſes happineſſe, both here and hereafter too. A full fruition of Chriſt, is full felicitie: a full fruition of any thing below Chriſt, without Chriſt, is but vanity and vexation of ſpirit. The more then, O fallen Man, thou canſt get into communion with thy God, the more will thy great loſſe be repaired, thy complaining ſoul ſatisfied, and thy tranquilitie ſetled upon thee againe. Hunt not then after Riches, honours, pleaſures, and ſuch like low delights of the ſonnes of men with this deluded miſtaken world, which lies in wickedneſſe; for felicitie is not in theſe: but ſtudy and ſtrive after a neerer communion with Chriſt: The next way to get moſt in with him, is the ſpeedy way unto all happineſſe: ſo much as thou canſt get of *his* company, ſo much art thou in heaven. *How precious are thy thoughts unto me, O GOD, how great is the ſumme of them? If I ſhould count them, they are more in number then the ſand: when I am awake I am ſtill with thee.* Pſal. 134. 17, 18.

This is heaven upon earth; and that true Nobilitie and Honour, which wee ſhould be ambitious after; to loſe our ſpirits in God. What an unſpeakable felicitie is it, to bee ſtill with God in our

thoughts ? This ennobles the ſpirit of man, and makes it a companion to the King of Kings : this gives evenneſſe and ſteadineſſe to a mans courſe ; and makes him walk in all the wayes of God blameleſſe : this gives tranſcendant Peace and tranquility to a mans ſpirit, and makes him unmoveable in the midſt of feares : This gives Bread in famine ; drinke, in drought ; peace, in warre ; health, in ſickneſſe ; life, in death. Devote thy ſelf therefore to CHRIST, that he may devote himſelf to thee : And as a poore *medium* of Communion, make uſe (if thou pleaſe) of this enſuing Treatiſe. If thou get any good, give glory to GOD ; and make the poore Pen-man, a conſtant ſharer in thy prayers.

Thine in Chriſt,

Theophilus Philantropus.

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FINIS.

CHRIST'S COMMVNION WITH His Church Militant.

JOHN 14. verſ. 18.

I will not leave you comfortleſſe; I will come to you.

CHRIST and his Church are deare each to other: The truth of this is at large manifeſt in this Chapter. Chriſt as a heavenly Husband, being to leave his earthly Spouſe; to wit, his Church Militant, and to live with his Father at his right hand in glory, with His Church Triumphant; endevoureth with various verſes of this Chapter to comfort the ſad ſpirit of his Beloved Spouſe, which hee perceived was much dejected. The verſe which I have choſen to inſiſt on, is one of them: *I will not leave you comfortleſſe, I will come to you.* In more words let me repeat this verſe againe. *Thou, O my Love, my Dove, my faire One, art ſad I ſee, and diſconſolate at my departure! As a Lilly in the valley; nay, as a Lilly*

Lilly (indeed) among thornes I ſhall leave thee: the Prince of darkneſſe dwelling in the children of darkneſſe, will endeavour to devoure thee; Sons of Belial will beſet thee, perſecute and torment thee, as they have done me before thee: but be not at this diſmayed O faireſt of women! dejected, as one without all conſolation: for I will not leave thee comfortleſſe, I will come to thee.

What difference is there between a priſon-houſe and mine own houſe if ſweet friends continually come to me there? 'Tis a priſon and no better we abide in, whilſt we dwell in the body: fetter'd we are with many luſts, and groane we do, under the tyranny and oppreſſion of a body of death; and O! wretched men that we are, dwelling in theſe dungeons of clay if no friend from Heaven come to us? 'Tis true, O my Spouſe, what thou ſayeſt; and therefore that thy dwelling in the body may not be comfortleſſe I will come to thee. *I will not leave thee comfortleſſe, I will come, &c.*

The body is a priſon to the ſoule, and the world is a hell to both. The God of this world is a Devill, and the children of this world Devils, to the Spouſe of Chriſt. The father torments her ſpirit; and the children torment her fleſh: neither in body nor ſoule, whileſt in this world can the Spouſe of Chriſt be quiet. Wee that are thus in hell upon earth, ſhall quickly be comfortleſſe, if no friend from Heaven come to us. True oh my Spouſe: but to prevent this, *I will come to thee.* From Heaven to Earth (indeed) is a long journey; but yet this I'le not ſtand on; rather than thou ſhalt be left comfortleſſe, in any condition upon earth, I will from Heaven come to thee. Let it be what weather 'twil

and

and be at mid-night thou need's me, I will come to thee; *I will not leave you comfortlesse, I will come to you.*

Affliction hath made many friends vpon earth forsake me, O my Saviour! wilt not thou my heavenly friend so serve me? What if the Divell cast me into prison? wilt thou come to me there? wilt thou visit me when I lie in a nasty roome amongst nasty wretches, that curse and sweare, which thou canst not endure to heare? Yea, ô fairest of women! rather than thou shalt be comfortlesse in such a condition; *I will come to thee.*

Thou wilt come to me, ô my Saviour, one day; but what if the Devill keepe me in such a prison *ten dayes?* a long time? till the *iron enter into my soule?* Wilt thou not wax weary at last, and leave comming to me? No my Love, I am resolved to the contrary. [*I will not*] *leave thee comfortlesse* [*I will*] *come to thee.*

Why, but what if Satan winnow me as wheat, and cast me into sin, which is more odious to thee than any Prison, than any place, or any thing: wilt thou not then shake mee off for ever and never come to me more? This ô fairest of women! may make me cease comming to thee *for a moment*; but no longer: for I am resolved not to [*leave*] *thee comfortlesse* in any condition either of sin or punishment. *I will not* [*leave*] *thee comfortlesse* [*I will*] *come to thee.*

My Text, you see, is Christ conjugall promise to his Spouse, of all kindnesse, during the time of his personall absence. The matter of this promise is consolatorie; the forme according to which our Saviour expresseth this consolatorie language; is first

first negative; *I will not leave you comfortlesse.* Secondly, affirmative; *I will come to you.* These latter words containe the reason of what is delivered in the former. We cannot be comfortlesse; [*because*] Christ still comes to us. And thus taking the words; you may read them thus, *viz. I will not leave you comfortlesse* [for] *I will come to you.* No condition can be comfortless, if Christ come to us.

I will not leave you comfortlesse.] Οὐκ ἀφήσω ὑμᾶς ὀρφανούς, *I will not leave you fatherlesse and motherlesse. I will not leave you Orphans,* saith the Originall, ἀποτατίζομαι, the word comes from, that is here translated *comfortlesse*, which signifies, to bee made fatherlesse and motherlesse; which because it is usually a condition very comfortlesse; therefore is the word thus rendred, ὀρφανους, *comfortlesse.* Thus the children of Christ shall not be left. They are no *Orphans*, which have Christ for their Father. They are never totally bereft of all comfort, to whom Christ comes: and thus hee will still doe to his Church Militant. Christ will never leave cõming from Heaven to earth, although it be a very long journey, as long as he hath any one child upon earth. *I will not leave you comfortlesse.*

I will come to you,] Ἔρχομαι πρὸς ὑμᾶς, I returne to you, saith the Originall; spoken in the Present Tense, and not in the Future, [*I will*] *returne to you*, as we have it translated. *Ac si diceret Christus* (saith one) *se licet nondum profectum, jam esse in reditu*; As if Christ had said, although I am not yet gone from you, yet am I returning to you. Christ though not actually in person departed, yet was ready in spirit to be present with his Spouse to the end of the world.

Thus

Thus having paraphraſtically gone over theſe words, I will put the plain meaning of them into this *Theſis* in Divinity, *That the Church of Chriſt Militant ſhall not be left comfortleſſe, becauſe Chriſt will come to her.* Or thus, *no child of Chriſt upon earth ſhall be left comfortleſſe, for Chriſt will come to him.* What Chriſt ſpake at his departure to his Diſciples, was not for them onely, but for the comfort of all his people, to the end of the world. In his Diſciples he ſpake thus to all his children, that are or ever ſhall be upon the face of the earth. *I will not leave you comfortleſſe, I will come to you.*

This comfortable doctrine, that I may fully and methodically handle, I will lay open unto you theſe foure things: Firſt, that Chriſt doth come to his children upon earth. Secondly, how Chriſt doth come to his children upon earth. Thirdly, when Chriſt doth come to his children upon earth. Laſtly, why Chriſt will take ſo much pains, as to come to his children on earth? I begin with the firſt of theſe, to wit, that Chriſt doth come to his Church and children upon earth. The truth of this is evident by our Saviours own language, and by each godly mans experience.

Our Saviour, not onely in my Text, but in many other places promiſed to come to his Church Militant, and therefore ſurely he doth come to his people on earth: for Chriſt is God, *and God cannot lie, nor repent.* What Chriſt hath ſaid he will do, that he will faithfully perform to a tittle: *for faithfull is he that hath promiſed,* ſaith the Apoſtle. *Go therefore and teach all nations,* &c. *teaching them to obſerve all things whatſoever I have commanded you; and lo I am with you alwayes, even to the end*

of the world, Amen. Matth. 28.19.20. This place shews plainly, that Christ doth come to his children upon earth; and that he will do this to the end of the world. For Ministers (of all men) to walk faithfully in their places, teaching their flock to *observe [all] things that Christ hath given them in charge,* will cost them hot water: especially living in corrupt places. This our Saviour tenderly considered; and therefore that his Disciples might not be disheartened, he assures them of his company unto the last, to support and comfort them. *Lo I am with you to the end of the world.* Christ by this phrase of speech doth hint to us, that what he thus spake should reach further then unto those to whom then he appeared; namely, to all Ministers and people *to the end of the world,* that shall faithfully discharge their places and callings to his honour.

I might here tell you, that not onely Christs word, but also Christs name sets forth the truth of this, that Christ is with his Church Militant, and so consequently, that he doth come to her. He was called *Emanuel,* which being interpreted, is *God with us,* Mat. 1. 23. Which name was not onely to note Christ, as then corporally present with his Church, but to note Christ as one having actually assumed our nature, and so to be more gloriously present with his Church to the end of the world, then ever from the beginning after *Adams* fall. Now as she said of her husband *as his name is, so is he; Nabal is his name, and folly is with him:* so may the Spouse speak of her Husband Christ; as his name is, so is he. *Emanuel* is his name, which signifies *God with us,* and so indeed is Christ. He is

conti-

continually with us. What *David* ſaid of himſelf, in reſpect of Chriſt, that may we truly ſay of Chriſt, in reſpect of us. *Neverthelesſe* (ſaith he) *I am continually with thee; thou haſt holden me by my right hand.* Though Chriſt dwell in Heaven, and we on earth; yet neverthelesſe he is continually coming to us, and abiding with us.

The godly have, and do find the truth of this by bleſſed experience, which is the ſecond thing; and that which I rather inſiſt on for the confirmation of the truth in hand: becauſe againſt experience there is no diſputation. *Peter* found the truth of this, that Chriſt comes to his children upon earth, that their condition may not be comfortleſſe, *Herod* caſt *Peter* into priſon, and thought to have made him comfortleſſe; but Chriſt came to him, as you may ſee. *And behold* (ſaith the Text) *the Angel of the Lord came upon him, and a light ſhined in the priſon; and he ſmote Peter on the ſide, and raiſed him up, ſaying, Ariſe up quickly, and his chains fell off from his hand.* The Jews by a ſtorm of ſtones thought to have made *Steven* comfortleſſe, but Chriſts coming to him prevented it. Chriſt ſo glorioufly came to him in that deadly ſtorm, that he found more comfort (I believe) then ever he did before in his life: for *he looked up ſtedfaſtly into Heaven, and ſaw the glory of God, and Jeſus ſtanding at the right hand of God:* he ſaw the Heavens opened ready to receive him, which tranſcendently revived him: which glorious viſion he could never have ſeen, had not Chriſt come to him. *Paul* likewiſe found the truth of this point, when he had left *Athens*, and came to preach to the *Gentiles* at *Corinth.* He was very fearfull, what

ſucceſſe he ſhould find in his Miniſtery amongſt the barbarous *Gentiles*. Now our tender Saviour, that *Paul* might not be overborn with fear, and made heartleſſe and comfortleſſe, graciouſly comes to him in a viſion, as we may reade. *Then ſpake the Lord to Paul by night in a viſion, Be not afraid, but ſpeak, and hold not thy peace; for I am with thee, and no man ſhall ſet on thee to hurt thee, for I have much people in this city.* Thus at another time Chriſt came to *Paul*, that he might not be left comfortleſſe, when he was pleading his cauſe before *Ananias*, and like to be pulled in pieces. *And the night following* (ſaith the Text) *the Lord ſtood by him, and ſaid; Be of good chear Paul, for as thou haſt teſtified of me in Jeruſalem, ſo muſt thou alſo bear witneſſe at Rome.* At another time, Act. 23. 11. *Paul* and *Silas* together had experience of this truth, that Chriſt comes to his Church Militant. As they were pouring out their ſoules together in prayer, Chriſt wonderfully came to them: he came in an Earthquake, and made the *foundations of the priſon ſhake*, and ſo *opened all the priſon doores, and looſed every priſoners bonds.* Comfortable was Chriſts coming to *Paul* and *Silas*, but terrible to the Jaylour; for he ſeeing in what manner Chriſt broke in and reſcued his ſervants, would have killed himſelf; but Chriſt came graciouſly to his ſoul alſo, and reſcued it out of the hands of the Divel. Happy was it for this man, that Chriſt did finiſh two works in one journey; to wit, come to *Paul* and *Silas*, and deliver their bodies out of priſon, and withall come to their Jaylour, and deliver his ſoul out of priſon too. In an Earthquake Chriſt came both to Priſoners and Jaylour: for the Jaylour

lour came *trembling* to the priſoners of hope, as a man in deſpair, *and fell down*, ſaith the Text, *before Paul and Silas*. It is no matter how Chriſt come to us, ſo he comfort us before he leave us. Thus I have ſhewed to you, that Chriſt doth come to his Church Militant.

The ſecond thing that I am to ſhew you for the opening of the point, is, how Chriſt doth come to his Church Militant. To this I will anſwer, Firſt, more generally and briefly: Secondly, more particularly and fully. More generally and briefly I anſwer thus: Chriſts viſits his Church Militant, as *David* viſited and comforted *Hanun*, to wit, mediately by his ſpirit, as *David* did mediately by his ſervants. *And I will pray the Father, and he ſhall give you another comforter that he may abide with you for ever; even the* [*Spirit of truth,*] *&c.* Joh. 14. 16,17: *Peter* found the truth of this, that Chriſt by his Spirit comes now to his Church Militant. *While Peter thought on the viſion,* [*the Spirit*] *ſaid unto him, behold three men ſeek thee.*

But in the ſecond place, that I may more particularly and fully anſwer to this queſtion; to wit, how Chriſt doth come to his Church Militant, to comfort her in all conditions, I will lay before you the generall conditions of mankind, and ſhew you how Chriſt by his Spirit, as a Comforter, comes to us in them. The generall conditions of mankind are two, *proſperity* and *adverſity*,

Proſperity would ſoon bring the ſouls of Gods people to a comfortleſſe condition, did not Chriſt by his Spirit come to them. Satan that evil ſpirit is ſo buſie, coming to the children of God,

when in prosperity, that did not Christ also come to them by his almighty Spirit to quench all his fiery darts, their souls would soon be comfortlesse, the Lord knows. When *Peter* was warm in the High Priests Hall, then the divel by a damsel came to him, and so farre he prevailed on him, that had not Christ lookt back upon him, and by his Spirit come to him, he had been in a comfortlesse condition indeed. And thus would the condition of good men now be, which are warm in their nests with outward things, did not Christ come to them; when the sonnes of God be honourable, and great amongst the sonnes of men, as *David*, and *Solomon*, *Job*, *Jacob*, and *Abraham* were; then the divel in point of policy, though not out of love, visits them often, and by often coming to them then, draws their precious souls into many sinnes, as pride, ambition, malice, sensualty, and the like; which like cankers quickly fret and eat out all divine consolation in the soul, and leave it like the Prodigall, feeding upon husks; solacing it self with no other joy and content, then what the bare creature dipt in sinne will afford the sense; which you must needs say, is of all comfortlesse conditions, the most and worst comfortlesse. Now that these may not be left in this comfortlesse state, to perish eternally, Christ by his Spirit thus comes to them. First in a sweet still voyce behind them, as the Prophet speaks, saying, sometimes in the midst of their sensualty, this is not the way to eternall joy; no, this is the way, O sensuall soul, walk in it.

This still voice strikes a damp in the merry sensuall soul of a Christian, and makes his heart in the

the midſt of vain laughter, ſad. If this be not prevalent enough to turn him, but on again he will in his ſinfull way; then Chriſt comes with a witneſſe in thundring and lightning, to convince and ſting the conſcience, as he did to the Iſraelites to bring them to ſee their wickedneſſe in chooſing a King; untill God thundered and lightened from heaven fearfully, they laid not to heart their rejecting God as their King, but went on ſtrongly and unaffectedly in their way. And juſt thus oftimes it is with many of the ſonnes of God in proſperity, the ſtill voice of Chriſt ſweetly ſuggeſting, and mildly checking for ſinne, is not ſtrong enough to ſtop and turn them, untill the Angel of the Covenant come down into the conſcience, and ſtand with a flaming ſword, threatning nothing but Hell and Death, if they make on a ſtep further, they ſtop nor turn not; which though not Chriſts naturall carriage to his children, yet he will in tender love deny himſelf thus farre, at to put on an affrightning vizzard upon his ſmiling countenance, and come terribly, and ſave violently, by plucking his children out of the fire, rather then he will leave any of his ſo comfortleſſe, as to periſh remedileſſe. Chriſt will ſpeak out and ſpeak plain, as he did to *David* by *Nathan*, when a ſtill voice, and ſecret ſilent hints, and becks will not do, He will come and lay his mouth to a mans ear and cry aloud, when he perceives that the pleaſure or profit of ſinne hath made him very deaf: he will never leave crying and calling, ſtriking and knocking, till he hath made the deaf ſoul hear, and humble himſelf with *Peter* and *David*; and then he puls off the

terrible Vizzard from his countenance, and looks upon the mourning penitent, with a countenance like *Lebanon*, and his lips drop ſweet ſmelling myrrhe into his broken ſpirit: and ſo is not left comfortleſſe, according to Chriſts promiſe, *I will not leave you comfortleſſe, I will come to you.*

But ſuppoſe Satan ſhould not be buſie, coming to the ſonnes of God in proſperity; yet would worldly proſperity be a comfortleſſe condition, ſhould not Chriſt by his ſpirit come to them. Riches and honours, together with all other delights of the ſonnes of men, they are as the white of an Egge, things without ſavour, unleſſe Chriſt come along with them to us; they tire and weary, prick, diſtract and vex a man; they rob him of his ſleep, and many times of his wits, nay of his precious life; they drown mens ſouls in pride, voluptuouſneſſe, ſecurity, and ſo ſet them in the next way to hell. This ſnare waits at every ungodly mans table, which makes proſperity to him comfortleſſe. This ſnare, that it may not catch the godly, Chriſt comes to them by his Spirit, and ſanctifies proſperity by them: *He teaches them how to abound*; that is, how ſo to uſe the creature, as to enjoy ſervice and comfort from it, and to bring honour and glory by it.

The creature is empty of what it promiſeth, and entiſeing with what it hath: and this makes proſperity to every carnall man a comfortleſſe condition. Now to take off both theſe, Chriſt comes to his children which enjoy the creature, plenteouſly: he comes in the creature, and ſo cures the emptineſſe of it; that is, by his bleſſing he makes it ſatisfiable and contentfull to the enjoyer, which it is not of it ſelf:

ſelf: this is the peculiar gain that attends the godly: Chriſt comes in the creature to them, and ſo cures the emptineſſe of it, and puts ſuch a ſupernaturall virtue and ſweetneſſe in it, that *they are therewith contented.* And as Chriſt comes [*in*] the creature to cure the emptineſſe of it, ſo he comes [*with*] the creature, to cure the entiſeing of it. He doth by the creature lead the ſouls of his children to the Creatour: by the ſweet of the one, he lifts up their ſouls to heaven, to admire the ſweetneſſe of the other: ſo that, that which others are entiſed and beſotted with, and reſt in, that they take wing from to flee to heaven, whence comes every good and perfect gift, which is that indeed that makes proſperity a comfortable condition, which otherwiſe is comfortleſſe enough, the Lord knows.

Secondly, adverſity would be a comfortleſſe condition to the godly, if Chriſt by his Spirit did not come to them: This I ſuppoſe none will deny; *For no affliction in it ſelf is comfortable or joyfull,* but comfortleſſe, if Chriſt by his Spirit do not come to us. Corporall affliction is a comfortleſſe condition, unleſſe Chriſt come to us, and be our Phyſitian. Spirituall affliction is a more comfortleſſe condition, if Chriſt do not come to us.

Here theſe two queſtions are neceſſary to be anſwered: Firſt, how doth Chriſt come to us in corporall affliction? Secondly, how doth Chriſt come to us in ſpirituall affliction?

To theſe queſtions both together I thus anſwer: Chriſt the Phyſitian of ſoul and body, comes to both with comfort in one way; and that is by helping the ſoul to apply the promiſes of God, which are ſuitable to his diſtreſſe. If a child of God be

be sad and sorrowfull, because of corporall affliction, Christ comes to him by his Spirit, with this comfortable language, *I am all-sufficient*. Christ by his Spirit spreads abroad this Cardinall promise before the sad soul, and shews him what a depth of mercy is foulded up in it. There is a sufficiency of wisdome in me, to find out ways and means to deliver thee, though never so low brought. There is likewise a sufficiency of power, to prosecute right means to accomplish their right end. Nay, there is a sufficiency in me, to work about good for thee, O sad soul, without means.

There is a sufficiency of affection and will, to declare power and wisdome, with every attribute else, for thy good. If for all this application and amplification of a generall promise, the soul still droop under some corporall calamity; Christ doth then in such a soul, as *Jacobs* sons and daughters did for him, *They rose up* (saith the Text) *and comforted him*, Gen. 37. 35. So Christ by his Spirit, after a lively manner indeed, rises up in such a soul to comfort him: and now he leads this mourning Christian to some particular promise; that is, such a promise as speaks not of deliverance in generall, but of deliverance in particular, out of this or that kind of distresse, which he grones under. As to give you an instance; suppose a Christian be sad and take thought, as Christ saith, *What he shall eat, and what he shall drink, and wherewithall he shall be clothed*: then the Comforter comes with this particular promise, which speaks of deliverance out of this particular distresse. *First, seek the kingdom of God and his righteousnesse, and all these things shal be added unto you: take therefore no*

thought

bought for to morrow, for to morrow shall take bought for the things of it self. Matth. 6. 33, 34. If yet for all this, the spirit of a Christian still complain, as one fearing he shall want daily bread for him and his; then the Comforter comes, and perswades the soul to rest quietly upon the promise of God. He speaks now to the complaining Christian, as the Levites father in law did to him, *Comfort thy self, I pray thee, with a morsell of bread,* Judges 19. comfort thy self, O mourning soul! I pray thee, with this particular promise, which is but a morsell of that bread, which came down from heaven, one of the least favours that Christ hath procured for thee, to wit, a right and interest in the creature: with this perswasive language doth Christ follow the complaining soul, untill he hath perswaded him to own his own mercy? and so he keeps his children in povertie, from being comfortlesse.

As Christ in corporall afflictions comes to his children, and keeps them from being comfortlesse; so likewise he comes to them in spirituall afflictions, that they may not be left comfortlesse. If a child of God be sad and sorrowfull, because of this or that strong temptation, the Comforter then comes to him with this sweet language, *My grace is sufficient for thee.* Thou prayest, and Satan tempts thee; thou doest fast and pray, and yet Satan and thy lust are more violent upon thee; thou doest all this with bitter tears, and Satan is the more bitterly bent against thee, and thou art foil'd every moment. By this, O winnowed soul, Christ would shew thee, that thou wilt be comfortlesse, in the midst of all thy sore soul-labour, unlesse he come

come to thee. *This same shall comfort us concerning the work and toyl of our hands*, said *Lamech* of *Noah*: so may we say of Christ; this same must comfort us concerning the labour and toyl of our soules with any temptation; or else we shall be comfortlesse, though we labour never so much. And this Christ doth and will do, *I will not leave you comfortlesse, I will come to you.*

If a Christian lie languishing, because of Satans prevailing upon him by temptation, that he may not be comfortlesse in this condition, Christ by his Spirit comes to him, and shews him the fountain of his bloud, how deep it is, and how free it is. How deep it is, that it will drown all sinne; sinnes after conversion, as well as before: sinnes often repeated, as well as sinnes onely committed. And then he shews the wounded soul, how free this fountain is for *any that hunger and thirst for it*, *for any that are weary and heavy laden*, 1. John 1.7. and desire to be eased by it; and so by degrees draws the wounded soul, to wash his wounds in it by faith, and so Christ heals and comforts him. As the brethren of *Ephraim* comforted him, when he mourned because the men of *Gath* had slain his sonne, 1. *Chron.* 7.22. So Christ comes to us, and comforts us, when the devil by his temptations hath almost slain our souls, he like the good Samaritane, poures in oyl and wine into our wounds, and cures us. Though Satan passe by, and his limbs passe by, and leave us comfortlesse in the day of wounds and bleeding, yet Christ cannot, so full of bowels is he, nor will not, *I will not leave you comfortlesse*, &c.

If a Christian lie languishing, because of often and

nd frequent relapſes, after promiſes and purpoſes o do better; If this Chriſtian in the anguiſh of his pirit ſpeak to every godly friend, as the Prophet id to his. *Therefore ſaid I, Look away from me, I ill weep bitterly, labour not to comfort me, becauſe f the ſpoiling of the daughter of my people.* Iſai. 2. 4. Look away from me, O ye my Chriſtian riends, yea, and you, my faithfull Miniſter! for I will weep bitterly, labour not to comfort me, beauſe of the ſpoiling of my ſoul, by ſo often ſinning gainſt vows and promiſes, favours and bleſſings: Chriſt comes to this ſoul, and will not leave him omfortleſſe in this condition, (though it be indeed a very deſperate condition:) The Comforter uſually takes this courſe, with this comfortleſſe ſoul, to poure in ſome oyl into his deep wounds: e reaſoneth with him from the mercy of man to he mercy of God, from a drop to the Ocean; and it may be faſtens upon his own language once delivered to *Peter*. *Peter came to our Saviour and ſaid, Lord, How oft ſhall my brother ſinne againſt me, and I forgive him? till ſeven times? Jeſus ſaith unto him, I ſay not unto thee untill ſeven times, but untill ſeventy times ſeven.* Matth. 18. 21, 22. From this ſpeech the Comforter thus reaſoneth, with this ſad and ſore wounded ſoul, *viz.* If Chriſt would have *Peter*, a ſinfull man, ſhew ſo much mercy to one, ſo often offending him; ſurely Chriſt, a holy God, and infinite in love, is ready to ſhew much more compaſſion Himſelf to thoſe that are penitent, though they have ſinned times without number againſt him. Thus the Comforter leades this deſperate Chriſtian, as a weak wounded man by the hand, from the mercy of man to the

the mercy of God; and enables him this way, after some space of time, to take in comfort: for Christ is resolved, he will not leave this Christian comfortlesse. Christ will never leave coming to this comfortlesse soul, with this speech of his to *Peter*, and other of like nature (as Christ is well furnished for a Comforter) untill he hath brought him to drink willingly (for Christ forceth no Physick upon any Patient) of the cup of consolation more or lesse; and the longer sick-souls turn away their heads from this cup; the more (many times) he perswades them to drink at last.

If Christ *tentandi gratiâ*, for trialls sake, hide himself from a Chtistian, and so set him a mourning; I shall shew you by and by, how he comes to him. This is a condition (though of all deserted conditions the best) which will make a Christian heart comfortlesse indeed. *Thou didst hide thy face and I was troubled*, Psal. 30. 7. Gods hiding his face, though but for trialls sake, will so trouble a Christian, that he will quickly be a burden to himself, *and fear round about*, as it is said of *Pashur*. It will make him weary of the night, and weary of the day; weary of his own house, and weary of Gods house; weary of mirth, and account it madnesse; weary of riches, honours, yea life it self, and wish for death. *O that I might have my request, and that God would grant me the thing that I long for, even that it would please God to destroy me, that he would let his hand loose and cut me off; then should I yet have comfort:* then should I see the face of God, which I long like *Moses* to see; then would he lift up the light of his loving countenance, and cause his face to shine gloriously upon me,

me, whereas now I walk in the valley and shadow of death; dark dayes are all that go over my head; the glorious Sonne of righteousnesse shines not upon my soul from morning to night. To this sad soul thus bemoaning himself for want of his beloved, Christ his well beloved thus comfortably comes. *There hath no temptation taken hold on thee yet, O mourning soul, but that which is common to man; and be assured of this, that God is faithfull by whom thou art tempted, and will not trie thee above that which thou art able: but will with the temptation also make away to escape, that thou mayest be able to bear it*, 1. Cor. 12.15. For a moment, O faireſt of women, I saw just cause to hide my face from thee, to trie the truth of thy love to me, but know, that with everlasting kindnesse will I have mercy on thee. Thy dulnesse also in my service, and thy low-prizing my company, did something trouble me, but know, *that the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed, but my kindnesse shall never depart from thee: for this is as the waters of* Noah *unto me; as I have sworn that the waters of* Noah *should no more go over the earth; so have I sworn that I will not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee. O thou afflicted, and tossed with tempest, and not comforted; behold I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and lay thy foundations with Saphirs, and I will make thy windows of Agats, and thy gates of Carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant Saphirs.* Isai. 45. 8, 9. Out of this sweet language of the Prophet to the naturall branch, the Comforter will fetch such precious water of life, to revive his deserted soul; with these kisses of his lips will he

he ſo comfort him, that he ſhall be conſtrained to ſay with David; *Thou, which haſt ſhewed me great troubles, haſt quickned me again, and haſt brought me up again from the depths of the earth; thou haſt increaſed my joy, and comforted me on every ſide*, Pſal. 71. 6. I could hitherto, O my God, ſee thy back-parts, ſome ſad attributes of power and juſtice, which did terrifie my ſoul to look on; but lo, now I ſee thy glory, thou haſt cauſed it gloriouſly to paſſe by mé, nay, to ſhine upon me: I ſee thy face like Lebanon, comely as the Cedars; and herewith is my longing ſoul ſatisfied, as with marrow and fatneſſe. *This is my comfort in mine affliction; for thy Spirit, O Chriſt, by thy word hath revived me.* So that this Soul, though very ſorrowfull, yet is not left comfortleſſe neither. Thus I have anſwered the ſecond *Quære*, to wit, how Chriſt comes to us.

The third thing that I am to ſhew you, is, When Chriſt comes to us. *I will not leave you comfortleſſe, I will come to you.* But when, O my Saviour, wilt thou come to us? To this I anſwer firſt more generally; then more particularly and determinately. More generally and briefly, I anſwer thus, Chriſt is already come, and is preſent with his Church Militant, and will be to the end of the world, as hath been already proved. *I am come into my garden my Siſter, my Spouſe, I have gathered my Myrrhe with my Spice; I have eaten my honey combe with my honey: I have drunk my wine with my milk*, Cant. 5. 1. Chriſt we ſee by this ſweet language is come, and is with us already. *I am come*, &c.

But

But when will he come to me in particular, as a Comforter? This is the queſtion. To this I anſwer, firſt negatively, then poſitively. Negatively I anſwer thus: *viz.* Chriſt doth not come to us in this valley of tears, as *Aaron* was commanded to come into the holy place; *Let him not come at all times* with the Lord, *leſt he die*. Lev. 16. 2. If Chriſt ſhould not come to us at all times of our diſtreſſe, we ſhould die under our burden, ſo comfortleſſe ſhould be our condition. When my body is afflicted, I ſhall be comfortleſſe, If Chriſt do not come to me. When my ſoul is afflicted, I ſhall be more comfortleſſe, if Chriſt do not graciouſly come to me. When my head akes, teeth akes, back akes, or belly akes; yea, when my leaſt finger, or joynt in my body akes, I ſhall be comfortleſſe, unleſſe Chriſt comes to me, ſo dolorous and comfortleſſe a Creature is man.

Wherefore as a poſitive anſwer to the queſtion ere-while propoſed, know, that Chriſt comes to his Church Militant at all times, as long as his people live in this valley of tears, and are in any diſtreſſe of ſoul or body. He comes to them in proſperity, to ſweeten that, or elſe there would be but a little comfort and ſweetneſſe in it: but he comes to them in all adverſity after a more ſpeciall manner, o ſweeten that, being it ſelf very bitter, bitterneſſe in the abſtract; my meaning is, altogether bitter, without the leaſt ſweetneſſe or pleaſure in it, to ſoul or body: for no affliction is in the leaſt manner or meaſure joyous, but as Chriſt, by his kind coming to us then, makes it ſo.

But here I ſhall be thus queſtioned, *viz.* If Chriſt as a Comforter comes to his Church Militant in every diſtreſſe of ſoul and body, how is

it that many of Gods children, in corporall and ſpirituall afflictions, utter comfortleſſe and hopeleſſe language, as thoſe that find no Comforter come to them? *Is thy mercy clean gone, and haſt thou forgotten to be gracious?* (ſaith *David*) *haſt thou ſhut up thy loving kindneſſe in diſpleaſure? and wilt thou be no more intreated*, &c. Many ſuch like ſad and dolorous complaints are ſtill uttered by ſome of Gods dear children: now if Chriſt as a Comforter come to his in every diſtreſſe, why is it thus with theſe?

To this I will give anſwer firſt more indirectly thus. Poſſibly that ſoul which thus complains cannot but confeſſe, that Chriſt hath come and tendred comfort to him, though he through anguiſh and unbelief refuſed it. Now if our ſoul-Phyſitian come from heaven to us, and bring cordials for us, and we will not take them, but caſt them behind our backs; ſhall our Phyſitian be blamed for unfaithfulneſſe and negligence towards his Patients, as one that did not viſit them?

Again, poſſibly too, this Soul which thus complains, muſt confeſſe that Chriſt came to him at the very beginning of his untractableneſſe towards God, and told him that this would quickly bring him into a comfortleſſe condition, if not timely lookt unto; and bid him again, and again, by a ſweet ſtill voice behind him, to be more pliable to God, as he tendred his favour and his own comfort. Chriſt came to his Spouſe, ſaying *Open to me my Siſter, my Love, my Dove, my fair one, for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night.* But though Chriſt thus kindly came to his Spouſe, yet ſhe unkindly

ly put him off; and upon the matter no better then ſlighted him. *I have put off my coat, how ſhall I put it on? I have waſhed my feet, how ſhall I defile them?* &c. Becauſe of this untractable carriage, Chriſt departed from his Spouſe, and then ſhe made many complaints: *I opened to my beloved, but he had withdrawn himſelf and was gone.* The Spouſe could not now truly ſay, that Chriſt had not come to her; but ſhe might truly ſay that he did come to her, but ſhe ſlighted him, and therefore he was forced to leave her. Thus it is with many now, They mourn like *Rachel*, in their miſery, and are not comforted, becauſe none from heaven comes to them: ſuch as theſe cannot challenge Chriſt, for not making good his promiſe to come to them, if formerly he have come to them, and they have ſlighted him: If any Phyſician, obſerving my intemperancy in this or that, come to me and tell me, unleſſe you refrain ſuch and ſuch things you will certainly fall into ſuch and ſuch diſeaſes, which are very dangerous; if I ſlight him in this, and afterward fall into thoſe diſeaſes, and lie groning under them, I cannot blame my Phyſician, for not coming to me, but blame my ſelf that did ſo ſlight him. So it is between Chriſt and many a mourning ſoul; Chriſt hath come to him and told him, that if he go on in his ſinfull courſe, it will rob him quite of heavenly comforts; but he in this friendly way hath been ſo farre taken with the ſweetneſſe of ſomething below Chriſt, and ſo at laſt hath found the evil of his own way, according to Chriſts prediction, and yet complains of Chriſt not coming

ming to him; but how juſtly judge you.

Again, as this ſoul poſſibly cannot juſtly complain that Chriſt hath not come to him, ſo poſſibly he cannot juſtly complain that Chriſt is not come to him. That ſoul which complains after Chriſt, cannot truly ſay that Chriſt is not come to him: for we never truly deſire to come to Chriſt, or that Chriſt ſhould come to us, unleſſe he were already with us, and we with him. Chriſt, I conclude then, is come to this complaining ſoul, though not in that manner and meaſure as he deſires him. The thought of what I long for, if I have leaſt hope of attaining it, is a degree of conſolation.

Finally and more directly, I anſwer to this complaining ſoul thus, Chriſt as a ſenſible and ſatisfactory comforter comes to us at his time, and not at ours. Now Chriſts time to comfort mourners will make him moſt welcome, and that is uſually when the ſoul is brought to the greateſt extremity that it is capable of, and not utterly miſcarry. When *Peter* was ready to ſink on the ſea, and cryed out, *Maſter, ſave me, or I periſh*, then Chriſt came to him, and caught him by the hand: thus doth Chriſt uſually come with ſenſible and ſatisfactory conſolations, when poore ſouls are almoſt quite ſpent with temptations and ſoul anguiſh, and look every houre when they ſhall die and drop into hell. *He ſhall come to us as the latter and former rain unto the earth*, ſaith the Prophet. That is, at the ſeaſonableſt time, when the ſoul will make him moſt welcome; and that is, when burnt and ſcorcht with Satans fiery darts, as the earth with the heat of the ſunne, when

when parcht and chapt gaping for ſome heavenly ſhowers, then Chriſts viſits will be kindneſſe indeed, and Chriſts conſolations ſweet indeed. This ſtill remember, O mourning ſoul, that Chriſt keeps his word, if he do not *leave us comfortleſſe*, and this be aſſured he will not do, *I will not leave you comfortleſſe, I will come to you.*

But why wilt thou come to me, O my Saviour? To this I anſwer, firſt thus; *viz.* Chriſt will come to his Church Militant to be a comforter to fulfill his Fathers will. *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me*, ſaith Chriſt, *becauſe the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings to the meek: He hath ſent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captive, and the opening of priſon to them that are bound, to proclaim the acceptable yeare of the Lord, to comfort all that mourn*, &c. By this Text we ſee that Chriſt is anointed for this end, to come to us and be our Comforter, whileſt we live here below mourning in *Sion*. What is ſaid of the three friends of *Job*, that may I ſay of the bleſſed Trinity, *They made an appointment together to come to comfort him.* So the bleſſed Trinity have made an appointment together to come to us by Chriſt, and in all diſtreſſes ſweetly to comfort us.

Secondly, Chriſt will come as a Comforter to his Church Militant, becauſe he hath promiſed it: as Chriſt promiſed this in my Text, ſo in many other Texts. *And if I go away, I will prepare a place for you, and will come again: and I will pray the Father, and he ſhall give you another comforter, that may abide with you for ever.* By theſe promiſes Chriſt hath obliged himſelf to come as a Com-

forter to us: let therefore our deſervings of comfort be what they will, *Chriſt* will come to us, becauſe he hath promiſed he will. *Chriſt* ſtands much upon his word: *Chriſt* is God, and *God cannot lie: Though we believe not, yet he abideth faithfull and cannot deny himſelf.* A Chriſtian is ready to ſay to *Chriſt* as *Jephtha* to the Elders of *Gilead: Did not ye hate me, and expell me out of my Fathers houſe? and why are ye come to me now, when ye are in diſtreſſe?* So ſaith a Chriſtian, did not I hate thee O my Saviour, and did not I do what in me lay to expell thee from my ſoul, by my ſinning again and again againſt thy Spirit? And why art thou come to me now, to comfort me in my diſtreſſe? Why, this that was foreſaid, may ſuffice, O ſinfull ſoul, as an anſwer. *Chriſt* looks not at what thou haſt done, but at what he hath promiſed; and his word he will keep, though we change as the heavens: heaven and earth ſhall paſſe away, but not one jot of his word ſhall fall to the ground. *I will not leave you comfortleſſe, I will come to you.*

Theſe I conceive are the principall grounds, why *Chriſt* comes as a Comforter to his Church Militant: two grounds more may be alledged, as *Cauſæ minus principales*, leſſe principall cauſes; the firſt whereof is this. *Chriſt* comes to us in our diſtreſſes as a Comforter, that we may not ſtretch out our hands unto iniquity. Man in diſtreſſe is ſo deſirous of eaſe, that if *Chriſt* do not come to him and comfort him, he will go to ſinne and Satan for eaſe. *Cain* was diſconſolate, and becauſe *Chriſt* did not come to him as a comforter; he ran like a vagabond up and down the world, to find

eaſe

eaſe in any thing. *Judas* was diſconſolate, and becauſe Chriſt as a Comforter did not come to him, he made an halter his comforter. *Saul* being in diſtreſſe by the *Philiſtines*, becauſe Chriſt did not come to him by Urim, nor by Viſions, nor by Prophets, he went to the Devil for comfort. Now that Chriſts children may not thus do, *Chriſt will not leave them comfortleſſe, but will come to them.*

The ſecond ground why Chriſt will come to his Church Militant as a Comforter, is this: That he may ſtop the mouthes of all ungodly wretches, who ſay of the godly when in great diſtreſſes, *Perſecute and take them, for there is none to deliver them.* A wicked man looking upon a wounded ſoul with a carnall eye, breaks out into ſome ſuch language, as *Achiſh* did concerning *David. Lo, you ſee the man is mad.* This man is a diſtracted perſon, fitter for Bedlam then for Gods houſe; an idle, crackt brain fellow, unfit to come into ſolemn aſſemblies. Now that Chriſt may ſilence ſuch black mouthed men as theſe, he graciouſly comes to ſuch wounded ſouls, and heals their broken hearts, and binds up their wounds; he poures the Spirit of conſolation upon ſuch as went mourning all the day long, and makes them walk with joy and ſtrong conſolation, ſo that ſuch as cenſured them for this and that, are forced to lay their hand upon their mouth, and to condemne themſelves as blind Bats, and not able to diſcern the wayes of God towards his children.

Having thus opened the point in hand, I will in the next place ſhew you how uſefull it is, to the wicked and to the godly. Will not Chriſt leave any of his children upon earth comfortleſſe, but ſtill

ſtill as a comforter come to them? Then you which live in your ſins, and ſo conſequently none of Chriſts children, may collect the unhappineſſe of your condition from this point. You ſhall live and dy comfortleſſe, for Chriſt will not come to you as a Comforter; thus he comes onely to his children. Chriſt will not come to you in proſperity as a Comforter; and therefore in the midſt of ſenſuall laughter your hearts will be ſad, in the midſt of all thy worldly contents thy ſpirit will at times gnaw and beat within thee, and never will all thou enjoyeſt give any complacency of comfort to thee, becauſe Chriſt as a Comforter comes not to thee. All outward comforts, without the inward conſolations of Chriſt, they are as good broth unſeaſoned, which rather cloies then contents the appetite; they weary, diſtract, and vex, and not revive the owner. Be it, that thou art as wiſe as *Achitophel*, as eloquent as *Herod*, as learned as *Gamaliel*, as rich as *Nabal*, as honourable as *Haman*, as great in the Church as *Judas*; why, yet ſhalt thou live comfortleſſe, that is, utterly deſtitute of celeſtiall conſolation; one drop whereof hath more ſoul-reviving ſweetneſſe in it, then all the things of this life can afford Alas! what is learning? what is wit, wealth, honour, or any other worldly thing to comfort me, if Chriſt do not come to me? A man may have all that this world can afford, and yet hang himſelf for want of comfort, if Chriſt come not to him, as *Achitophel*, *Judas*, and others have done.

Ob. No men laugh lowder, nor laugh oftner then wicked men in proſperity, no man merrier in an Alehouſe, Playhouſe, Tavern, Fair, or Market, then they, and are not theſe then the

the onely comfortable men in the world?

Sol. To this I anſwer firſt thus: Laughter is one thing, and Spirituall conſolation another thing: Every one that laughs hath not a cheerfull ſpirit within: for in the midſt of laughter a mans heart may be ſad, ſaith *Solomon*. And ſo on the other hand, every one that hath a comfortable ſpirit hath not a laughing face: We do not reade that Chriſt ever laughed, and yet had more comfort in his Spirit, then all the merry men of this world.

Secondly, I anſwer thus: Some mens ſpirits are ſo left of God to levity and vanity, that they will laugh at the wagging of a ſtraw (as we ſay.) This is a great judgement of God upon the ſpirit, and not to be accounted a comfortable and happy condition? *It is a paſtime to fools to do wickedly*, ſaith *Solomon*. This is not properly called *mirth* (ſaith he) but *madneſſe*. You ſhall ſee mad men laugh ſometimes exceedingly, and whup and hallow, as if their ſpirits were as full of joy as they could hold, what ſhall we conclude now, that theſe forlorn creatures are in a comfortable condition? Alas! ſay we, if they were but ſenſible of their condition, they would ſoon ceaſe laughing, and begin lamenting. And ſo may I ſay to you of all that laugh and rejoyce, and yet live in their ſinnes, and ſo conſequently have no Comforter from heaven come to them, they are mad men; were their eyes open to ſee their forlorn condition, they would quickly change their note, and turn their mirth into mourning, as *James* ſaith.

Queſt. Why, but doth not Chriſt come to the wicked in proſperity?

Anſw. Yes, no doubt to be made of it. Chriſt came

came to *Belshazzar* whilest he was quaffing in the golden vessels of the Temple, and wrote down his wickednesse in the wall. And thus he comes to all ungodly persons in prosperity, to write down all their ungodly deeds, that so he may exactly judge them at the great day of account.

Quest. Why, but doth not Christ come as a Comforter to wicked men that are great and wealthy?

Answ. Christ regards no man for his wealth, or for any externall greatnesse. If a man be never so rich, or never so honourable, yet if he have not denyed his lusts, and given up himself to Christ to be ruled by him, Christ will never come to comfort him, if he would give him all he hath for his pains, he will not step a foot out of doors to a Prince, if he be wicked,

Ob. Why, but though he will not come to ungodly men as a Comforter in prosperity, when they can make some shift without him, yet he will come to them as a Comforter in adversity, when all other comforts fail.

Sol. No he will not. Christ will not know thy soul in adversity, which are a disobeyer of him. As he would not let *Dives* have a drop of water to cool his tongue, though in unutterable torments, where many Oceans would not in the least measure have quenched the flames: no neither will he afford thee the least drop of consolation in thy greatest extremity; though thou cry Lord, Lord, and cut thy flesh in the fervency of thy spirit, like *Baals* Priests, to prevail, yet shalt thou be sent empty away. Nay Christ will be so farre from being a Comforter to ungodly men when in misery; that

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He will adde to their outward misery, inward misery. When thy body is in distresse, *Christ* will awaken thy soul that now lies asleep, and set thy conscience a gnawing within thee, which will be greater torture then if thou were [illegible] every limb. Thou mayest send for godly Ministers and godly friends to comfort thee then, and they possibly may deliver very comfortable things, but they shall be of no more savour to thy soul, then the white of an egge; because *Christ* as a Comforter will not speak those sweet things to thy soul, which thy friends do to thy ears. As the Lord bewails the miserable condition of *Jerusalem*; so may I bewail the miserable condition of all ungodly men. *These two things are come unto thee, who shall be sorry for thee? desolation, and destruction, and the famine, and the sword? by whom shall I comfort thee?* So say I to all ungodly persons: misery upon misery will first or last seize upon you, and who then shall be sorry for you? Famine, and sword, and pestilence; sickness, and death, and judgement; and by whom will you be comforted? your Honours cannot comfort you: your Riches and friends cannot comfort you: your father the Devil he will not then comfort you: your conscience which you have often sinned against, shall not comfort you, but torture you: because *Christ* will not come to you, to sprinkle it with his bloud, and to pacifie it. So that I conclude all; thus you will live comfortlesse, die comfortlesse, and abide in hell after death everlastingly comfortlesse.

It is true all that you say, Sir, man is a comfortlesse creature indeed, unlesse *Christ* come to him, I find it by wofull experience. I have much wealth

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in my purse; and yet but little peace in my spirit. I see the devil (methinks) now and then, sit astride upon the top of my money-bags, waiting for me, when I come to comfort my self in the beholding of them, and to what this will come at last I cannot tell, Sinne I am sure I do, and comfortlesse because of sinne I am, and more comfortlesse every day I look to be, unlesse Christ come to me, and yet how to get him to come to me I know not.

Wouldest thou, O comfortlesse creature, have Christ come to thee? Do then to Christ as *Lydia* did to *Paul*, lovingly invite him to come to thee. Make known thy comfortlesse condition to Christ, & then earnestly entreat him to visit thy poor soul. The ground why I exhort thee, O sinner, thus to do, is, because God hath promised *to give his holy Spirit to them that ask it*, Luke 11.13. If therefore thou wouldest have Christ by his Spirit to come to thee, invite him, ask him, begge, and entreat him to come and dwell in thy soul, and tell him that he shall have every room in thy heart at command. As *Rebekahs* brother said to *Abrahams* servant, so do thou say to Christ; *Come in thou blessed of the Lord, wherefore standest thou without? for I have prepared the house, and room for the camels*, &c. Come in thou blessed of the Lord, wherefore standest thou without? here is room for thee and all thy glorious train. Here is an understanding, will, memory, affections, they shall be all at thy use and service O Christ, wherefore come in thou blessed of the Lord, and make thy abode with me. Thus continue crying to Christ, and longing for him, and by this thou wilt declare thy great love unto him, and so make thy self capable

of

of that ſweet promiſe, which ſaith, *If a man love me, the Father loveth him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him*, John 14. 12. Then will thy condition be comfortable indeed, when thou haſt got ſuch glorious in-mates as theſe to dwell with thee.

Having thus ſpoken what I thought fit to the wicked, by way of application from this point, I will now addreſſe my ſelf to ſpeak unto the godly, and ſhew them how uſefull this point may be unto them. I ſhall firſt ſpeak to ſtrong men, & then unto Babes in Chriſt. Firſt, to ſuch as can tell me, that Chriſt as a comforter is come to them. Secondly, to ſuch as can tell me they never yet found Chriſt as a Comforter come to them. And laſtly, to ſuch who can tell me that they have found Chriſt as a Comforter come to them, but now they have loſt him. To you that tell me you find the truth of this doctrine by bleſſed experience, that Chriſt is come to you; I have onely two things to ſay: Firſt this, Make it ſure to thy ſelf that Chriſt indeed as a Comforter is come to thee, and that thy ſoul is not deluded in thy joy and conſolation. Secondly, ſtrive ſo to walk, that thy Comforter which is come to thee may never depart from thee. Firſt, ſtrive to make it ſure, that Chriſt indeed is come to thee, that the comfort which thou haſt is from the Comforter, to wit, the Spirit of Chriſt, and not from the ſpirit of deluſion.

There is great need that I ſhould preſſe this inſtruction upon you, becauſe the ſpirit of deluſion is plentifully poured out in theſe latter dayes. The hypocrite hath his joy; and he judges that this his joy, is the joy of the holy Ghoſt, and as good

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as need to be; whereas it is a joy that shall perish (saith the Scripture) a joy that will end in desperate sorrow. He thinks that Christ as a comforter is come to him; whereas it is onely the Devil transformed into an Angel of light. And thus indeed [illegible] thousands gulled and cheated in their comfort. Sadnesse would overshadow the smiling face of many a man, if he did but discern how groundlesse his joy and comfort is; and what a vain shadow in stead of a true substance, his poore soul is deluded withall. Wherefore, my brethren, it concerns you, that tell me you are sensible that the Comforter is come to you, to take pains to make it sure to your selves, that your souls are not deluded.

When the Spirit of God came upon *Saul* that he prophesied, the people that knew him before, said, *What is come to the sonne of Kish? is Saul among the Prophets?* Thus do thou say to thy soul, who art so merry and comfortable, *viz.* What is come to thee, O my soul, that thou art now so joyfull and chearfull? Once I am sure thou went'st mourning all the day long: is Christ as a comforter come to thee? If Christ by his Spirit have brought glad tidings to thee, why then, O my glory, continue in thy mirth; but if not, why art thou so merry O my soul? thy mirth is but madnesse. As *David* questioned his soul for sadnesse, saying, *Why art thou so sad, O my soul? and why art thou so cast down within me?* So maist thou do well to question thy mirth, saying; Why art thou so merry O my soul? and why art thou so much lifted up within me? Is thy Comforter our Lord Jesus Christ indeed come to thee? O then, my glo-

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ry, ceaſe not to declare thy comfort, by any comely poſture and geſture: but if not, a houſe of mourning, O my ſoul, is fitter for thee then a houſe of mirth; garments of ſackcloth and ſadneſſe, would better become thee, then garments of joy and gladneſſe. You know how *Iſaac* once ſpake to his ſon, *Art thou* (ſaith he) *my very ſon Eſau?* Gen. 27.24. So do thou humbly queſtion thy Comforter. Art thou my very Comforter indeed? Art thou the *very Chriſt* the Sonne of God, which ſpeakeſt conſolation to my ſoul? You know how *John* queſtioned Chriſt much after this manner, that he might not be deceived concerning him. *Art thou he that ſhould come, or do we not look for another?* Mat. 11. 3. So do thus ſay, Art thou he that ſhould come and comfort my ſoul? or ſhould not I look for another? There be many falſe Chriſts, and falſe comforters now in the world, and they deceive many: wherefore I beſeech thee ſpeak out, and ſpeak plainly to my ſoul, whether thou be he that ſhould comfort me yea or not, that if I have obtained the true Comforter, I may give God the glory of his great kindneſſe; if not, I may ſeek out for another.

How ſhould I know (may the ſtrong man in Chriſt ſay to me) whether he that is come to my ſoul with conſolation, be he that ſhould come, or not? How ſhould I be able to make it ſure to my ſoul, that the conſolation which I have is from the Spirit of Chriſt, and not from the ſpirit of deluſion.

To this thus I anſwer, *viz.* If he that is come to thy ſoul be he that ſhould come, to wit, Chriſt, thou ſhalt find that he doth more works then one in thy ſoul; He doth not onely comfort thee, but he

he doth many great works beſides this. Chriſt doth many great works in a mans ſoul before he comforts him; and he doth many great works in his ſoul after he hath comforted him. Chriſt doth many great works in the ſoul of man before he comforts him: he doth break the heart before he binds it up: he firſt wounds the heart before he will heal it: he caſts down the ſoul for ſinne before he will raiſe it up. Now to break the heart of man, which the Scripture compares to an *Adamant*. Zach. 7, 12. for hardneſſe, is a great work; and yet this doth Chriſt throughly before he comforts throughly. The breaking of the hard heart of man, hath many great works about it, ere it be effected. The convincing the ſoul of ſinne, which ſelf conceited man is not eaſily brought unto. The making of ſinne out of meaſure ſinfull in the ſouls apprehenſion, which blind manis not eaſily brought to ſee. The making of man to loath himſelf for the evils which he hath committed againſt God, which man full of ſelf-love is not eaſily wrought unto. The making of man to long for peace and reconciliation with God as the greateſt happineſſe in the world, and to begge this bleſſing with tears as a ſoul that ſees he ſhall die and periſh eternally without it; which man that naturally hates God, is not eaſily wonne unto. Yet all theſe difficult works doth Chriſt do in the ſoul of man before he comes as a Comforter to him. Which Chriſt confirms, when he ſaith; *Bleſſed are they that mourn, for they ſhall be comforted.*

Now wouldeſt thou know whether he that is come to thy ſoul, be he that ſhould come or not? why then tell me? What did preceed thy comfort

which

which now thou haſt ?Did *Chriſt* lead thee to the Wells of conſolation by the waters of *Marah* ? Did he bring thee to ſow in tears, ere he gave thee to reap thy great harveſt of joy ? Waſt thou ever in the houſe of mourning? Did the ſpirit of heavineſſe for ſin ever take hold on thee? Was thy hard heart firſt broken, and after this, bound up, firſt wounded, and after this healed? Didſt thou go mourning for diſhonouring God, all the day long, and after many dolorous dayes ſpent, did thy Comforter come to thee? Surely then he that is come, is he that ſhould come, and do not look for another; but if otherwiſe, thou haſt juſt cauſe to be jealous of thy joy.

Again, *Chriſt* as he doth great works in the ſoul before he comforts it ; ſo he doth great works in the ſoul after he hath comforted it. That ſoul which *Chriſt* comforts, he makes a very fruitfull ſoul in all grace to his glory. No waters make the ſoul of a Chriſtian grow in grace, like the waters of conſolation. The comforting Spirit of *Chriſt* is to a Chriſtian in the wayes of obedience, as wind and tide to a Ship, that which makes him runne the wayes of Gods Commandments. That Chriſtian which is comforted by *Chriſt*, prayes fervently, and prayes frequently. Conſolation gives wings to ſupplication. That Chriſtian which is comforted by *Chriſt*, praiſeth God with ſtrong affection. A ſoul comforted by *Chriſt*, is as an inſtrument well tuned by a skilfull Muſitian, he will, upon every occaſion, make ſweet melody in the eats of the Almighty. True conſolation is from Heaven, and it carries that ſoul ſtrongly to Heaven ; in which it is. True conſola-

tion is from Christ, and it will make a Christian live wholly to Christ. To whom much is forgiven they love much, and his love constrains them to deny themselves, and to follow Christ unto death.

Wouldest thou know then for certain, O strong man in Christ, that he which is come to thy soul, is he which should come? Why then look what activity is in thy soul to duty. Is thy soul as a Gyant refreshed after wine? strong and vigourous to the practise of all good duties? Art thou abundant in the work of the Lord? Art thou a sweet singer in *Israel* of the praises of the Lord? Is thy heart at thy mouth leaping within thee, like the Babe in *Elizabeths* womb, when thou art telling what God hath done for thy soul? Art thou (in a word) a holy and heavenly man, as one comforted by a holy and heavenly God; Doth thy joy transcend the joyes that this world affords, in sweetnesse? Doth it raise thy spirit to admire the love of God? and doth it make thee dead to secular delights? and to account naked carnall mirth madnesse, empty husks for bruits to feed on? Then mayest thou comfortably conclude, that he which is come to thy soul, is he which should come, and do not look for another: but if thou art merry and chearfull, but not holy and heavenly, he that is come to thy soul, is not he that should come; wherefore I beseech thee to look for another.

A second instruction which I would commend to strong men in Christ, is this: after thou hast made it sure to thy soul, that Christ as a comforter is indeed come to thee, then strive so to walk, that

that he may never depart from thee. So a man may walk, that Christ as a comforter may forsake his soul. *David* had wofull experience of this truth, and so doubtlesse have many else of the godly. So a man may walk that Christ as a comforter never depart from him: But how should I thus walk, saith the comforted soul, that I might enjoy this heaven below, till I come to that above, and so go from joy to joy, from joy unspeakable and full of glory, to joy that cannot enter into any mortall heart to conceive of?

To this I thus answer: Do not grieve Christ that is come to thee: Secondly, do all that thou canst to delight him, if thou wouldst have him continually abide with thee. Do not sit down and rest, as one that hath a license to be lazy, and as if all thy work were done, now thy Comforter is come to thee; this will grieve him, and quickly make him leave thee. Thou hast obtained Christ to come a comforter to thee; well: yet let me tell thee as *Moses* did the *Israelites*. *You are not* (said he) *as yet come to the rest, and to the inheritance which the Lord your God giveth you.* So say I to thee, O comforted soul, thou art not yet come to those degrees of consolation, which thou mayest attain unto in this life, if thou continue to be thrifty. The joy of the holy Ghost is a bottomlesse well which thou canst never draw dry: and the more thou drawest, the fresher and sweeter still thou shalt find it. The joy of the holy Ghost is no surfetting thing, as some earthly sweets are: and therefore thou mayest safely say, *Lord evermore give me of this bread*: fill my soul with flagons of this precious liquour: let thy love be shed abroad in my heart by the

holy Ghoſt: Let my ſoul delight her ſelf in this fatneſſe.

Secondly, now Chriſt as a comforter is come to thee, do not wax wanton againſt him, this alſo will grieve him, and make him quickly forſake thy ſoul as a comforter. Let all the manifeſtations of thy comfort be ſuitable to thy comforter: holy as he is holy, ſpirituall and heavenly, as he is. *When ye are come into the good land take heed that ye do not forget the Lord* (ſaid *Moſes* to *Iſrael.*) So ſay I to you that find Chriſt with you as a comforter, which are come to the fellowſhip of the Spirit, and to the participation of that tranſcendent comfort which is by him, take heed that ye grow not giddy headed, and forget God and your ſelves. The waters of conſolation are ſtrong waters, and mans weak head and heart cannot bear much of them ſteadily, but are ready to reel on one ſide or other. When the clouds of heaven have well watered the earth, then do weeds as well as good herbs ſpring apace: ſo when Chriſt by his Spirit, ſweetly waters the ſoul with conſolation, then levitie and vanitie, as well as Chriſtian mirth and cheerfulneſſe, ſpring amain, if a Chriſtian be not very watchfull over his ſoul, to pluck up ſuch weeds by the roots, as ſoon as they begin to ſhew themſelves. I conclude this thus, thou that art comforted by the Spirit, let not the manifeſtation of thy comfort grieve the Spirit. This remember, that ſatan hath an art to bring evil out of the greateſt good, as God hath an art to bring good out of the greateſt evil: and therefore beg that thou mayeſt not be ignorant of any of his devices, nor unable to reſiſt them if thou wouldeſt not loſe thy comforter.

Secondly,

Secondly, if thou wouldeſt have thy comforter to abide ſtill with thee, as thou muſt not grieve him, ſo thou muſt do all that thou canſt to delight him. Let it be thy meat and drink to follow all the motions of the Spirit of Chriſt: whitherſoever Chriſt would have thee go, cheerfully obey him; this will delight thy comforter exceedingly, and make him rejoyce to continue with thee. If Chriſt ſay unto thee as to the Fiſhermen, *Follow me*, do thou readily replie as the Scribe, *Maſter, I will follow thee whitherſoever thou goeſt*, Matth. 4.19. Matth. 8. 19. This is to declare the genuine diſpoſition of Chriſts people, which Chriſt is exceedingly taken withall. Chriſts people are as a willing people in their obedience. *Thy people ſhall be willing in the day of thy power*, &c.

Secondly, humbly and compaſſionately tell diſconſolate ſouls, what Chriſt hath done for thy ſoul; this will delight thy comforter much, and make him rejoyce to continue with thee. Chriſt delights to ſee his children communicative of the ſweet meats which he gives them. And therefore as *Jael* ſaid to *Barak*, ſo do thou, O comforted ſoul, to ſuch as go mourning all the day long: *Come* (ſaid ſhe) *and I will ſhew thee the man whom thou ſeekeſt*, Judges 4. 32. Come, O ſad ſoul, that canſt not find him whom thy ſoul loveth, I will ſhew thee the man whom thou ſeekeſt, the manner of his coming to my poore ſoul, and how long he made me wait upon him ere he would come to me, and how well he hath now made me amends for all his ſtaying. And therefore, *Although thou ſayeſt thou ſhalt not ſee him, yet judgement is before him, therefore truſt thou in him*, Job 35.14.

For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it, because it will surely come, it will not tarry, Hab. 2. 3. The more imparting of experiments of love we are to the glory of Christ, the more still will Christ graciously give us to our further comfort. And this indeed is Gods end in comforting some of his children, *that they may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith they themselves are comforted of God:* as the Apostle sweetly affirms.

Thirdly, thank Christ humbly and heartily for his coming to thee, if thou would'st have him abide still with thee. The Israelites when they came into the promised land which flowed with milk and honey, they were to take the first of all the fruits of the earth, and put them in a basket, and so present them to the Priest, saying, *viz. And now behold I have brought the first fruits of the land, which thou the Lord hast given me*, Deut. 26. Thus were they to set their first fruits before the Lord, and to worship before him, as you may see at large. Why, you that enjoy Christ as a comforter, you have received the first fruits of that good land, which *Canaan* typified, which flows with milk and honey. Bring therefore these first fruits, and set them before God, and worship: bring the sweet comforts of the holy Ghost in your hearts, before the Lord, and say, Behold O Christ, these and these are the sweet consolations of thy Spirit: and lo, for them all I humbly render praise to thy Name. Such mighty enemies of my peace hast thou conquered; such doubts which so long troubled me, hast thou answered: such wants which

so

ſo long time kept me exceeding low, haſt thou ſupplyed: to thee O, God, be the glory of thine own goodneſſe.

You have great cauſe thus to magnifie the Lord for his mercy, which find Chriſt as a comforter come to you. You enjoy that bleſſing which exceedeth all outward bleſſings. The light of Gods countenance lifted up, upon a poore mourning ſoul, it is of farre greater value then corn, wine, oile; then corall, rubies, or any choice thing that this world can afford. The naked revelation of Chriſt in the ſoul of man, is of more worth then all theſe, ſaith *Solomon:* the moſt glorious revelation of Chriſt then to the ſoul, which the ſoul of man is capable of in this life, muſt needs be of much more tranſcendent worth. You enjoy that bleſſing which exceedeth many inward bleſſings. It exceedeth knowledge; for what is knowledge in the head, to the joy of the holy Ghoſt in the heart? one beam of light in the underſtanding, is of more worth then all the ſilver and gold, gemmes, and jewels in the world; and yet one beam of the light of Gods countenance, ſhining upon the heart, though but by reflexion from the face of Jeſus Chriſt, is of more worth then all knowledge which humane ſtudy can attain unto. I cannot ſay that this bleſſing exceedeth the leaſt ſaving grace in the ſoul: but this I can ſafely ſay; that conſolation, it is the gloſſe and glory of every grace: every grace ſhines in its full luſtre, where the Comforter dwells. This I can further ſay, that you enjoy that bleſſing which makes Heaven a Heaven, and which makes earth a heaven to you: and therefore you have great reaſon to magnifie

the Lord for his mercy. The more of heaven we enjoy upon earth, the more should we set our selves to do the work of them which are in Heaven, whilest on Earth.

Fourthly, finally let Christs mediate coming to thee by his Spirit, make thee long earnestly for his immediate coming to thee in his own person; this delights Christ, that his Spouse should say, *Come*. Revel. 22. 17. as the Spirit doth, that she should long for the wedding day, as he doth. When good old *Simeon* had embraced the Consolation of *Israel*, for which he so long waited, he then desired presently to be dissolved: so thou that hast embraced the Consolation of *Israel*, shouldest in holy manner with *Simeon*, *Job*, and *Paul*, desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ, which is best of all. You whom Christ hath kissed with the kisses of his lips, should long earnestly to lie between his breasts all night; my meaning is, to have a full enjoyment of Christ. Thus have I done speaking to such who can tell me that Christ as a comforter is come to them.

In the next place I addresse my self to speak to such of the godly, who can tell me that they never yet found Christ as a comforter come to them. Two or three things I have to say to you from this sweet doctrine.

First, I would have you to labour to believe this doctrine, that Christ *will not leave you comfortlesse, but will certainly* (at last) *come to you*. Christ hath repeated his promise, which is as a bond with many seals; and therefore thou hast just ground to believe, O comfortlesse soul, that Christ *will not leave thee comfortlesse but will come to thee.*

Ob.

Object. What just ground have I to believe that Christ will come to me, seeing he is holy, and I am unholy, he is glorious in holinesse, and I am abominable in sinne and wickednesse, saith the weak comfortlesse soul.

Sol. Art thou more vile then *Manasseh*? Christ came to him and comforted him. Art thou more muddy and earthly then *Zaccheus*? Christ came to him and comforted him. Art thou more divelish then *Mary Magdalene*, out of whom were cast seven divels? Christ came to her, and filled her soul with strong consolation. Why shouldest not thou believe, that Christ will come to thee too and quiet and comfort thy mourning spirit?

Sol. But secondly I answer thus: *viz.* Christ doth not so much look how thou art qualified, as at what he hath promised: Christ hath promised he will come to thee, and he is faithfull and will do it. If thy soul were never so poore, never so blind, never so wretched, never so naked; yet Christ having promised to come to thee, he will make good his word, though he come backward, with a mantle to cover thy nakednesse, as *Shem* and *Japhet* did to *Noah*. If thy soul were full of wounds, if thy soul were full of running putrifying sores, if thou wert as black with sinne as an *Ethiopian*, if thou wert as spotted with sinne as a Leopard, nay if thy soul did stink within thee, as *Lazarus* after taken out of the earth again, yet Christ hath promised to come to thee and comfort thee, he will do it; though he hold his nose while he be comforting thy stinking nasty soul. Heaven and earth shall passe away, but not a jot or tittle of Christs promise shall fail. *The voice*

of

of my beloved, behold he commeth leaping upon the mountains, and skipping upon the hills. Cant. 2.8. Though there be mountains and hills of sinne in thy soul; yet Christ will come skipping over all these with comfort to thy soul, rather then thou shalt be left comfortlesse.

Wherefore, O weak comfortlesse soul, say not of thy Saviour and Comforter, as *Balaam* did, *I shall see him, but not now; I shall behold him, but not nigh.* Numb. 24.17. I shall see Christ come with a witnesse, nay, with many thousand witnesses at the great day, when *every eye shall see him*; but I shall not see him come to me now, in this soul dolour, as a comforter. I shall behold him peradventure, as *Moses* beheld the holy land farre off, he will never come nigh my poore soul, to stay it with those comforts which it needs. Cease, O weak soul, this incredulous language, and strive to believe, and this sweet promise I treat of shall be made good unto thee, No sinne so mighty to keep thy Comforter from thee, as unbelief. Say then, O mourning Christian, to thy comfortlesse soul; *Yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry*, Heb. 10.37. He that hath said he will come as a Comforter to thee, will come and will satisfie thy soul with consolation, as with marrow and fatnesse. Say to thy sad soul, with the Psalmist, *My God will come and will not keep silence*: he will speak consolation so plainly, that my ignorant soul shall understand; so powerfully, that my incredulous soul shall believe, and own her own mercies. Thou art now tossed and almost drowned, O my soul, with restlesse wayes of misery; but the spirit will

move upon theſe waters; thou ſhalt ſee Chriſt coming towards thee; upon theſe troubleſome waves anon, and ſay, *Be not afraid, it is I*: I that have loved thee, and given my ſelf for thee, and none ſhall pluck thee out of my hand.

Secondly, as I would have thee to ſtrive firmly to believe this truth; ſo I would have thee endeavour patiently to wait the accompliſhment of it. Believe that Chriſt will come to thee, and wait patiently untill he do come. There is good ground why every ſoul ſhould patiently wait for Chriſt coming to him, whether we conſider our ſelves which are to be viſited, or Chriſt our viſitour. If thou, O comfortleſſe ſoul, conſider thy ſelf which art to be viſited; there is great reaſon thou ſhouldeſt wait patiently till Chriſt come to thee, how long ſoever he ſtay.

Firſt, thou art a creature, and Chriſt is thy Creatour; and ſhould not a creature wait on his Creatour? Thou art a ſervant, and Chriſt is thy Lord; and ſhould not a ſervant wait on his Lord? Conſider thee in thy higheſt relations, and they all call for waiting. Thou art a Sonne, and Chriſt is thy Father; and ſhould not a Sonne wait on his Father? Thou art a Wife, and Chriſt is thy Husband; and ſhould not a Wife wait on her Huſband?

Secondly, conſider that thou haſt deſerved, that Chriſt ſhould never come to thee, and yet for all this, ſeeing he will come to thee, haſt thou not juſt cauſe to wait patiently till he do come, how long ſoever it be firſt? Before thy calling thou didſt reject Chriſt, and ſince thy calling thou haſt often grived Chhriſt; and haſt not thou then deſerved that

that Christ ſhould never come to thee? Thou haſt quenched many a ſweet motion of the Spirit of Christ: thou haſt turned the deaf eare, the ſweet ſtill voice that hath ſpoken behind thee, times without number, and ſo ſlighted the Spirit of Christ; and haſt not thou then juſtly deſerved, that Christ as a comforter ſhould never come to thee? yet ſeeing he will come for all this unkindneſſe, haſt not thou juſt cauſe to wait patiently for him, how long ſoever he ſtay; Thou haſt many weeks, many moneths, nay, many years gone along in a courſe of grieving Christ, and doeſt thou think much of waiting a few weeks, a few moneths, a few years for Christ to come to comfort thee?

Take this in another form. Thou didſt make Christ wait a long time upon thee, ere thou wouldeſt let him abide with thee as a ſpirit of Reformation; and is there not juſt cauſe then, that thou ſhouldeſt wait patiently a long time upon him, if he will have it ſo, ere he abide with thee as a Spirit of conſolation? how many knocks did Christ give at thy ſtubborn heart, ere thou wouldeſt open to him? how much dew of the night diſtilled upon his locks, ere thou wouldeſt give him houſe-room in thy heart? how many mercies? how many corrections were all ſpilt upon thee, ere Christ could winne thee to reſpect him? canſt thou tell? if thou canſt not, think not much, if Christ make thee ſhed a few tears, and breathe out a few grones, ere he bring glad tidings of peace unto thee.

Secondly, if thou conſider Christ thy viſitour, there is all the reaſon that can be, that thou ſhouldeſt

deſt wait patiently till he come to thee. Chriſt will certainly come to thee: Chriſt will come to thee at the fitteſt time: Chriſt will come richly when he doth come; which are all ſpeciall grounds of patience. Chriſt will come to thee, O comfortleſſe ſoul, though it may ſeem to thee ſomething long firſt. Thou doeſt not wait for one that will not come at all, as the *Turk* waiteth for *Mahomet:* Nay, thou doeſt not wait for one that will frivolouſly delay the time of his coming. Thou doeſt not wait for one that will deceive thee. Chriſt hath promiſed to come to thee, and he is faithfull, and cannot deny himſelf. There is two things in faithfulneſſe: firſt, that a man ſhould own what he hath ſaid; and then ſecondly, that he ſhould make it good. Now both theſe will Chriſt do. Chriſt will not eat his words, as we ſay; what he hath promiſed he will confeſſe, and will make good, whatſoever labour or loſſe he be at to do it. Chriſt is not mutable as we are, to promiſe one thing to day, and recall it again to morrow: *he is immutable and changeth not, therefore we are not conſumed.*

Thou doeſt not wait for one that will frivolouſly delay the time of his coming. Chriſt will not deal with thy comfortleſſe ſoul, as thoſe forty gueſts dealt with Chriſt, make excuſes: one had bought a yoke of Oxen, and therefore could not come: another a Farm, *&c.* Chriſt will not tell thee, as *Abraham Dives* in hell, between thy ſoul and him is a great gulf, ſo that there can be no entercourſe between them; nor that from heaven to earth is too long a journey for him to make: He will not tell thee that the place where thy

thy sick comfortlesse soul lies, is filthy, and altogether unfit for him to come to. He will not tell thee that thy soul is so farre gone in grief and desperate sorrow, that it is in vain for him to come to thee. Christ puts none of these delayes upon any of his patients.

No, the ground why Christ stayes is, that he may come at the fittest time, and then he will come with healing in his wings, if all the devils in hell should oppose him, which methinks should be a satisfactory ground of patience to any disconsolate soul. If a Physician yet apply this, and that, further evacuation rather then cordials, as knowing the body not yet fit for cordials, will not any wise man submit patiently to his way? so if Christ forbear giving thy sick soul cordials, as he that well knows thy soul not fit yet for such luscious things, wilt not thou with much thankfulnesse acknowledge his great care over thy soul, and with all patience wait his leisure? I patiently undergo the pain of drawing plaisters, when I know my sore is not fit for healing: thus should it be in spirituall distresses: we should patiently undergo grief and sorrow untill our souls be fit for consolation, and then we shall be sure to have it.

Finally, be sure of this, O mourning soul, that Christ will come richly, when he doth come; and therefore methinks thou shouldest wait patiently for him: what Merchant but would wait patiently the return of his ship in the longest voyage, if he were sure that it would richly return at last. Christ will come very richly furnished, with the comforts of the holy Ghost, which are unspeakable

unspeakable and glorious, to your souls that mourn after him, and wait for him. What the Apostle once spake of himself in relation to the *Romanes*, that may I truly say of Christ, in relation to all that mourn after him: *And I am sure that when I come unto you, I shall come* (saith he) *in the fulnesse of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ*, Rom. 15.29. Christ I am sure, O mourning soul, when he doth come unto thee, he will come in the fulnesse of the blessing of the holy Ghost: thou shalt have joy in the holy Ghost unspeakable and glorious. Thou by long waiting art made a more vast vessell to hold the precious waters of consolation; and Christ by long staying, doth (as I may say) the more furnish himself with these waters of life, to refresh, fill and satisfie thy thirsty soul, when he comes to thee. Christ will heal throughly thy broken heart, and bind up all thy wounds: he will answer all thy doubts, and clear all thy scruples: he will quiet thy quarrelling conscience, and still thy complaining spirit: he will fill thy sad soul with joy and gladnesse, and thy dejected spirit with songs of thanksgiving.

If these things, O mourning soul, will not make thee wait patiently till thy Comforter come to thee, but thou wilt murmure and repine, and fall upon indirect wayes to get consolation, know, that by this practise, thou wilt make thy condition more miserable, then at present it is. Thou wilt grieve him that should come as a Comforter to thee; and if thou by sin make Christ grieve, how can Christ by his Spirit make thee rejoyce? and if thou set him a mourning that can onely comfort thee, by whom wilt thou be comforted? Dost thou

thou think to winne Christ to thee by a dogged disposition? Christ may pitty, and cure thy humours, but will never be by Consolation. He will bring thee to be lowly and meek ere thou shalt find rest to thy soul; he will make thee willing to lie under his feet glad of crums of comfort, and willing to wait for them till Christ hath dined, and every child served.

If thy corrupt soul hanker after the pleasure of sinne again, because Christ as a comforter doth not come to thee, and thou be resolved to pick and chuse, amongst the sinnes thy soul knows, to find out one that thy soul most loves, to make a comforter to thee, as the Israelites in their dogged humour made them a captain to return to *Egypt* again; know this, that what sinne thou pitchest upon to make a comforter, that sinne will Christ make a Divel to torture thee: Christ will make thee know by wofull experience, that the sweetest sinne is a bitter and miserable comforter: that the least sinne, is too great an evil, truly to comfort the soul, that to go to the divel for consolation, is to make faster hastefor comfort, then good speed, that neither sinne, nor any thing in the world beside sinne shall comfort thy soul, when he himself will not.

3 The last instruction that I have to commend to thee, O comfortlesse soul, that didst never yet find Christ as a comforter come to thee, is this: observe how Christ comes, and do not put him off. Christ comes to comfortlesse souls with comfort, in a promise, as I have at large shewed you. The promise, Christ opens before the soul, that he may see the blessing wrapt up in it, which he needs; and then

then often repeats it to the ſoul, that he may relie upon it: inſtances to illuſtrate this way of Chriſt I have given you, things muſt not be here again repeated. That which here I would preſſe by way of application is, that you which are comfortleſſe ſouls, would obſerve this ſecret way of the Comforter, and meet him. Art thou tempted? and doſt thou now hear a ſweet ſtill voice, as it were behind thee, ſaying, *My grace ſhall be ſufficient for thee?* Why, this is the voice of thy Beloved, that is come to thee, embrace what he ſaith, reſt upon it, turn not thy Comforter away now, by unbelief and peeviſh pettiſh humours. Haſt thou fallen into ſinne, by the ſtrength of temptation and thine own corruption? and doſt thou heare ſuch a ſweet voice behind thee as this. *The bloud of Jeſus Chriſt cleanſeth us from all ſinne?* 1. *John* 1. 7. Why, this is the language of thy beloved, he is come to comfort thee, O mourning ſoul, do not thruſt him away by unkind language of unbelief and paſſion. Heare what he ſaith, for it is ſweet: ſtrive to believe what he ſaith, for it is ſure. As *Iſaac* ſaid unto *Jacob* his ſonne, after he had ſome diſcourſe at a diſtance with him, *Come near now and kiſſe me my ſonne:* Gen. 27. 26. So ſhould ſuch comfortleſſe ſouls ſay to Chriſt, when they heare Chriſt ſpeaking, as it were at a diſtance, ſoftly and coldly to them, the ſweet and melodious promiſes of his word; come near now, O my beloved, and kiſſe me with the kiſſes of thy lips, for thy love is better then wine: what thou ſayeſt to my ſoul, ſay it with ſuch life, that my heart may no longer be faithleſſe, but believe, and give glory to thee. I have now done

It is with many Chriſtians in their minority, as it was with *Samuel*, they do not know the voice of the Lord ſpeaking in a promiſe, and therefore I thought good to note this inſtruction.

ſpeaking to you, who never yet had the Comforter come to you.

I come now in the laſt place to ſpeak a word or two particularly, to ſuch of Gods people, who can tell me that they have found Chriſt as a comforter come to them, but now have loſt Him. Three things I have to ſay to theſe. Firſt, labour to be ſenſible of thy loſſe. Secondly, blame not Chriſt for departing from thee. Thirdly, uſe all holy means to get him to return to thee again. Firſt, I would have thee, O deſerted ſoul, to labour to be truly ſenſible of thy loſſe. Though it be that ſome are deeply ſenſible of this great loſſe, yet others are as deeply ſtupid, which moves me to note this inſtruction. For a man to be ſtupid and ſenſeleſſe under corporall afflictions, argues a very ill temper of ſpirit; but for a man to be ſtupid and ſenſeleſſe under ſpirituall afflictions, under ſuch a ſpirituall affliction as this, the loſſe of the Sunne, the loſſe of Chriſt as a comforter, argues a very ill temper of ſpirit indeed. Strive therefore, O deſerted ſtupid ſoul, to affect thine heart throughly with thy loſſe. Thou haſt loſt more then *Job*, when he had loſt children, ſubſtance, health, honours, and friends; nay, thou haſt loſt more then if thou hadſt loſt this world; nay, thou haſt loſt more then if thou hadſt loſt thy life, which is of more worth then the world: thou haſt loſt Chriſt, which is richer then the world, and ſweeter then thy life. What an infinite loſſe were it to this world to loſe the Sunne? it were at once to loſe all: *Pereunte ſole, pereunt omnia:* for all things ſerviceable for the uſe of man, depend upon the motion and influence of that glorious Body. What

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a losse then is to the lesser world, to lose Christ the Sunne of Righteousnesse? It is to lose all good at once, for soul and body. All Graces close and wither when Christ departs, as all fragrant flowers when the Sunne withdraws his influence. And when these flowers wither in the soul, a man is a moving dunghill, that stinks in the nostrils of God and man, whereever he comes. A man that hath lost Christ may truly say as she when the Ark was lost, *that his glory departed.* As the Sun in the glory of the greater World, so Christ the Sunne of Righteousnesse is the glory of the lesser World, to wit, man.

Thou hast lost that in the world, that is more worth then the world, and which all the world can never help thee to. Thou hast lost that which would make the worst condition in this life, a Heaven; whereas the best without it is but a hell. Thou hast lost that which would have been to thy soul a continuall feast; whereas now thy soul is in a continuall famine and leanness. Thou hast lost thy spirits, and thy soul is in a dead palsie, so that thou art a living dead man, fit for no spirituall service. Thou hast lost thy head, thou hast lost thy eyes, thou hast lost thy hands, thou hast lost thy clothing, nay, thou hast lost thy best father, thy best husband, thy best friend; all this, and much more comfort is Christ to man. Thou hast great reason then, O deserted soul, to lay to heart thy losse.

Lay to heart thy losse, this is comely, but do not blame Christ for departing from thee, this is uncomely, and unrighteous. Uncomely; for it doth not suit with wisdomes children, to lay folly

to their Maker. Unrighteous, for thou constraineſt him to depart from thee, otherwiſe he had never left thee: thou didſt ſinne again and again of weakneſſe, and yet Chriſt as a Comforter did not depart from thee; untill thou beganſt to take *pleaſure in unrighteouſneſſe*, and to make ſinne a cuſtome, *a right eye*, a very ſerviceable thing unto thee, Chriſt did not leave thee. Thou beganſt to wax wanton againſt Chriſt; and then Chriſt caſt thee off. Thou beganſt to play the Apoſtate, and to backſlide in heart from Chriſt; and then he fell off from thee, *and filled thee with thine own wayes*. Now theſe things ſeriouſly conſidered, haſt thou any cauſe to blame Chriſt for departing from thee? It is a comely and a very righteous thing for Wiſdomes children to juſtifie wiſdome in all his wayes, as to others ſo to our ſelves. Wherefore thus do, O deſerted ſoul, ſay, Righteous art thou, O Chriſt, in departing from me, and righteous mayeſt thou be, if thou never return to me, ſo unkindly have I dealt with thee.

Then ſet thy ſelf ſeriouſly to the uſe of all holy means, whereby thou maiſt get thy Comforter to return to thee. Examine thy ſoul throughly thou muſt, to find out what evil deprived thee of ſo great a good; and in ſerious ſoul-ſearching God will ſpeak to thy conſcience, and conſcience will ſpeak plainly to thee, and tell thee wherein thou didſt give diſtaſt to thy Comforter, and what was the cauſe he forſook thy ſoul.

And when thou haſt found out that evil, which conſcience tells thee deprived thee of ſo great a good, thou muſt fall very foul with it, how ſweet ſoever

ſoever it hath been unto thee. Thy great work muſt be to bring thy heart to a holy *revenge* upon this ſinne: to abhorre it, and thy ſelf becauſe of it: and to become very vile, as *Job* ſaith, and very low in thine own eyes. Bring thy heart to admire the infinite patience and mercy of God, that things are no worſe with thy ſoul. That God had not cut thee off in the acting of that ſinne for which he deſerted thee: that he hath left any place for repentance, and given thee the leaſt deſire to ſet about this work.

And when thou art come thus farre, poſſibly the light of Gods countenance may begin now and then to glance into thy ſoul, as at ſome little cranny, or at leaſt ſome more then ordinary lightſomeneſſe may appear in thy dark dull ſoul, as there doth in the dark morning, ſome ſpace of time before the ſun appears that had left this Horizon. Now this beam of light, or this little lightſomeneſſe of ſoul, thou muſt much admire; and acknowledge an unfathomed depth of love in it; that God ſhould ſo much as once ſtoop, to caſt an eye after thee more, to give thy ſoul the leaſt refreſhing, that did abuſe flagons of love.

By this glimpſe of light, or glimmering light, you are to ſtrengthen your faith in the belief of this; that light will more and more appear, as the light of the morning unto the perfect day: and ſo conſequently to follow God with ſo much the more fervency of prayer, for the return of his *wonted kindneſſe*. *Joſeph*, you know, carried himſelf very roughly to his brethren which had abuſed him, for ſome ſpace of time, and put them in great fear of the loſſe of their lives; told them they were *Spies*,

and many harsh words he gave them, and harsh looks: but at last when his brethren had brought him to *Benjamin*, and discoursed a while, *Josephs* bowels began to work, and he could no longer withhold his brotherly love, *Come near to me, I pray you, I am Joseph your brother*, &c. Thus Christ our elder Brother deals with us, who do unkindly and unbrotherly use him: he will handle us very roughly, and put us in fear of the losse of our best lives: he will make our consciences speak bitter things against us, and let loose the devil to tell us that we are *Spies*, hypocrites, and false friends to Christ: in this distracted, affrighted, perplexed state, he may hold us many dayes, many weeks, many moneths; but he cannot hold in his brotherly love alwayes, if we patiently bear his frowns, and kindly entreat him, and bring *Benjamin* to him, his own bloud and merits; this will make his bowels work, and make him unmask himself and say, come near to me, O mourning souls, tossed and not comforted, I am Christ your elder Brother, whom ye unkindly used, in a little wrath I hid my face from you, but now with everlasting kindnesse will I embrace you.

Trin-uni Deo gloria.

FINIS.

CHRISTS COMMUNION With his *Church Militant.*

2. Tim. 4. verse 22.

The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit.

THis Text is *Pauls* sweet affectionate farewell to *Timothy.* Many grave and gracious instructions *Paul* had given *Timothy*; but it is not much what man saith to the eare, as what Christ saith to the heart that works effectually, to set man about his duty; and therefore doth *Paul* in the conclusion of all his Christian counsel to *Timothy* pathetically pray, *That the Lord Jesus Christ would be with his Spirit.*

The best teaching of man is but as water spilt on the ground, unlesse Christ inwardly teach the spirit. If I am taught my duty by a *Paul*, one in gifts not inferiour to the chiefest Apostles, yet unlesse Christ be with my spirit, to make things take root there, all will die and wither, like good seed cast into bad ground. And therefore *Paul* saw it but needfull, as to teach the eare, so to entreat the Lord to teach and strengthen the spirit. *The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit.*

There is a great distance (you know) between the eare and the heart: it is an easie thing for man to bring home things unto the one, but no lesse then the almighty power of Christ, will bring home things unto the other. There is an incomparable hardnesse upon the heart of man naturally: it is harder then an *Adamant:* now though a child with his little finger may make a dint upon dough, yet a Gyant with all his strength cannot make dints upon an *Adamant:* much lesse can all created strength, make divine impressions upon the spirit of man; and therefore it is, that *Paul* doth implore an Almighty strength to do thus, *The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy Spirit.*

Why doth not *Paul* here wish riches and honours and pleasures unto *Timothy?* Is the bare presence of Christ with a mans spirit such a blessing? To this I answer, riches and honours, *&c.* They are *bona*, but not *optima*: good things, but not the best things. Earthly things though good in themselves, yet are no further forth good to me, then as the Lord Jesus Christ is with my spirit, to guide it to use them; and therefore *Paul* as one truly wise, prayed for the prime good for *Timothy*, for that good which makes all other things work together for good, to wit, *That to have the Lord Jesus Christ with our spirits, is a prime and principall blessing. Paul* here wisheth it to *Timothy*, as a cardinall blessing, *The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit.*

Enucleatio propositionis.

To have Christ with our spirits, &c. How can Christ be present with man upon earth, who is now ascended, and sitteth at the right hand of his Father in heaven? The

The Apoſtle doth hint an anſwer to this queſtion, in the form of his prayer, if you obſerve it. *The Lord Jeſus Chriſt ſaith he, be with thy ſpirit.* He ſpeaks of ſuch a preſence, as will fitly yield communion and fellowſhip to the ſpirit of man. There is a double preſence of Chriſt with man, corporall and ſpirituall joyntly; or merely ſpirituall. With juſt men made perfect in glory, Chriſt is corporally preſent; they behold his wounded body made a glorious body, as a continuall aſſurance of the Reſurrection of their own vile bodies unto the ſame ſimilitude. And with them Chriſt is preſent, ſpiritually filling them with thoſe joyes, the taſte of which upon earth, is called *unſpeakable and full of glory.* Of this communion ſpeaks Chriſt himſelf. *I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one,* John 17. 23. As the ſoul is *tota in toto, & tota in qualibet parte*: according to the whole, in that whole which is leſſe noble then it ſelf: according to the whole, that is, according to that full force and energie which the ſoul hath, it actuates and organizeth every member of the body, the leaſt as well as the greateſt; So Chriſt in the myſticall body of Saints glorified, is as I may ſay, *Totus in toto, & totus in qualibet parte.* Whole Chriſt doth wholly exerciſe dominion in every glorified ſoul; hence it is, that all ſuch ſouls, are wholly holy, and wholly happy, that is perfectly holy, and perfectly happy: forasmuch as Chriſt, who is in the fulneſſe of his Fathers glory, is fully preſent with them.

Secondly, there is a preſence of Chriſt with man, merely ſpirituall; that is, ſuch a preſence, as whereby not the perſon, but the providence of Chriſt

Christ may be seen, Such a presence as *superiora* have with *inferiora*, not a *contiguall*, but a *virtuall* presence; a presence of influence and governance, as the Sunne hath with us by his rayes and beams. And this presence is either *Common* or *Speciall*.

The common presence of Christ with man, is, that whereby man is upheld and guided, according to the being of a rationall creature. Of this presence of Christ with man speaks the Apostle, *that they should seek the Lord, if happily they might feel after him and find him though he be not farre from every one of us, for in him we live, move, and have our being*, Acts 17. 27, 28. Christ as an upholder of each creature, is not farre from every one of us; that is, he is still present with us thus, and *with all Nations of men, which he hath made of one bloud, to dwell upon the face of the earth*. This presence of Christ with man therefore cannot properly be called a *prime* and *principall blessing*, a choice and favour, because it is common to mankind in generall, yea, common to all creatures below man; for God is with all the works of his hands, to uphold every creature according to its proper species.

Secondly, there is a speciall presence of Christ with man which is that efficacious working of the Spirit of Christ, in the spirit of man, whereby it is made one spirit with the Spirit of Christ, in willing and nilling, according to that of the Apostle, *He that is joyned to the Lord, is one Spirit*.

There is a speciall presence of Christ with the bodies of men, for the good of them; which the *Psalmist* intimates, where he saith, *That he knows our frame, and remembers that we are but dust: and*

that

that the *Angels of the Lord pitch their tents about the righteous.* And *Jacob* found the truth of this by experience, when he fled before *Esau*, and slept so sweetly upon a stone. But this tender and speciall presence and providence of Christ, respecting the outward man, is comprehended under the other, which respects the inward man, as *quid minus sub majori*, a lesse blessing under a greater. For if God be in a speciall manner present with my spirit, to guide and order that unto all holy wayes, my spirit will command my body to walk in them too: and so consequently Christ cannot choose but be tenderly present with me also, for the good of that, whilst every member thereof is actuated by a spirit of His own ordering, to His own honour, *as weapons of righteousnesse.* And therefore doth *Paul* (pithily, to speak much in few) silently passe over that which is necessarily presupposed, praying, that Christ would be with *Timothies* spirit, and then he was sure, Christ would be after a speciall manner present with his body too for the good of that. *The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit.* That is, *The Lord Jesus Christ exercise a speciall dominion in thy spirit, for the guiding and ordering of it, unto the avoiding of evil, and to the performing of all good, whereby Christ may have all the glory due to his Name.*

Now that thus to have Christ present with a mans spirit, is a prime and principall blessing; I will plainly demonstrate to you by a triple argument *ab effectu.*

Thus to have Christ present with our spirits, is the ready way to all temporall, spirituall, and eternall good; and therefore must needs be a prime and principall blessing. Thus

Thus to have Christ present with a mans spirit, is the ready way unto all temporall good. Men whose spirits Christ doth after a speciall manner order, to avoid sinne, and to *keep themselves pure*, as *Paul* here useth the expression to *Timothy*, all temporall good things, so farre forth as may be good for them, belong unto them by promise: *For godlinesse hath the promise of this life. It shall come to passe* (saith the Lord) *if you walk in my wayes, that I will blesse you in the fruit of the womb, in the fruit of the field, in the basket and store*, &c. *If you walk in my wayes I will do this*, &c. Why, they with whose spirits Christ is after a speciall manner present, this is their *high way* (as *Solomon* saith) *to depart from evil:* that is, this is their dayly endeavour, to walk in all the wayes of the Lord; and so consequently, all temporall good of right belongs unto them.

But you will say, how is it then, that those with whose spirits Christ is most present to make them most tender for his honour, have usually least of all temporall good things?

To this the answer is easie and manifold. Men with whose spirits Christ is most present, to make them most tender to avoid sinne, and to keep themselves pure, these the devil doth most of all maligne, and sets his limbs to *spoil them of their goods*. As the Authour to the *Hebrews* saith, to keep them from that which Christ would have them advanced to; or else to strip them of that, which Christ hath conferred on them, by imprisonment, banishment and the like; and so make such live in dens, and holes, and caves of the earth; to wander in Deserts and Wildernesses, wearing sheep

sheep-skins, and goat-skins, of whom the world is not worthy. Where a spirit of malice and confusion rules, it is no marvell to see servants sit on horseback, and Princes go on foot.

Secondly, men with whose spirit Christ is after a speciall manner present, he takes speciall notice to what evil the spirit is most enclined, and so answerably gives of these outward things unto them. A wise Father hath his eye upon the disposition of his child, and to what exorbitancie he finds him enclined, he labours to prevent all occasions to it, and so keeps his child short of what he could otherwise liberally allow him. And thus it is with our heavenly Father, respecting his children: he eyes strictly their spirits, and if he see them enclined to pride, covetousnesse, or any other scandalous vice, he shortens them in that which may foment these. At this (I think) *James* may point, where he saith, *Let the rich rejoyce in that he is made low.* James 1. 10. God out of tender love to his children oft-times makes them poore in purse, that they may become poore in spirit, and so capable of the kingdome of heaven. Which rightly weighed, is no matter of sorrow, but matter of joy, as *James* saith.

Thirdly, those with whose spirits Christ is after a speciall manner present to guide them to walk in his wayes, and to keep themselves pure; Christ doth prove them by poverty, as by other things: and hence it may come to passe, that Christians very holy, may yet notwithstanding be very destitute of the things of this life. Thus you know the Lord dealt with *Job*. Christ was after a speciall manner present with his Spirit, to guide him to

to walk uprightly above many in his time. Now to make known this to the world, to his own glory and *Jobs* eternall honour, he stript *Job* of all, and set him upon a dunghill, who before sat with the chiefest in seats of honour. God will have the world know, that those with whose spirits he is after a speciall manner present, to guide and order them, are not as those with whose spirits the devil is in a speciall manner present, to guide and order; to wit, such as will wind and turn every way when put to it.

Lastly, those with whose spirits Christ is after a speciall manner present, they desire but little of the things of this life; and therefore it is no marvell to see Christians very holy, yet not very wealthy. Christians with whose spirits Christ is after a speciall manner present, they onely desire dayly bread; *Agurs* portion, food convenient; and this the Lord gives them, and with this they are contented, which is the onely wealthy estate. Christians, with whose spirits Christ is after a speciall manner present, *they hunger and thirst after righteousnesse*, not after riches in the world, they *covet the best gifts*, the unsearchable riches of Christ, and not the fading riches of this life. Now Christ applies himself to be most liberall in the distribution of that, which the spirits of men most bend after; in mercy, or in justice. Christians whose spirits most strongly bend after grace, to these Christ in mercy doth most bountifully apply himself to give grace; according to that of Christ, *Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousnesse, for they shall be filled.* Christians whose spirits most strongly bend after worldly riches,

to

to theſe oft times Chriſt in juſtice moſt liberally applies himſelf to give thoſe, according to that of the Pſalmiſt, *Whoſe belly thou filleſt with thy hid treaſure.* According likewiſe to that of *Solomon, There is a ſore evil which I have ſeen under the Sunne, namely, riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt:* Pſal. 17. 11. Eccleſ. 5. 13. The objection being thus anſwered the argument is ſtill of force. That to have Chriſt with our ſpirits is the way to all temporall good, and ſo conſequently, *a prime and principall bleſſing.*

But that I may yet more fully ſpeak in this argument, note that temporall good, is either poſitive, or privative; (if I may for illuſtration ſake ſo diſtinguiſh.) Temporall good in a poſitive ſenſe, is that ſecular thing, which is in it ſelf good; as bread, and clothing, and the like, of which we have already ſpoken.

Temporall good privatively ſo called, is affliction ordered to a mans good, which in it ſelf is not ſo. Now all thoſe with whoſe ſpirits Chriſt is preſent, are partakers of this temporall good. All outward croſſes tend to their inward gain, becauſe Chriſt is with their ſpirits. For all outward troubles are heavier or lighter, more hurtfull or more profitable ſtill to a man, as Chriſt is pleaſed to order his Spirit under them. A little outward trouble, if Chriſt let it ſeize upon a mans ſpirit he quickly ſinks and dies under his burden, according to that of the Apoſtle, *worldly ſorrow cauſeth death.* The loſſe of a wife or husband; nay, the loſſe of a child or friend; nay, the loſſe of the leaſt outward content, if Chriſt ſtand aloof from a mans ſpirit, and let it faſten upon him, he

he will soon languish, and bleed inwardly to death; whereas all outward afflictions, meeting together upon the outward man, if Christ be with the spirit to support and bear up that, a Christian sweetly submits, and keeps on his course, according to that of the Apostle, *Rejoycing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing instant in prayer*, Rom. 12. 12. Now Christ tenderly watches when outward troubles begin to take hold of that Spirit with whom he is specially present, and then he quickly relieves and eases it; and not onely so, but sanctifies it, to the drawing of such a spirit nearer to God in love, according to that of *David*, Psal. 116. 1, 2. *I love the Lord, because he hath heard my voice, and my supplications, because he hath enclined his eare unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live.* Adde this to the former, that to have Christ with our spirits, is the ready way to all temporall good, whether *positive*, or *privative*; and you must needs grant it to be a principall blessing.

Secondly, those with whose spirits Christ is specially present, are in the ready way to all spirituall good: and therefore thus to have Christ present with our spirits, must needs be counted a principall blessing. Christ is the authour and worker of all grace; and therefore such spirits must needs be very gracious with whom Christ is. *The places are holy whereunto the Ark of the Lord hath come*, saith *Solomon*, 2. Chron. 8. 11. I may truly say it of Christ, which the ark typified. The spirits are holy with whom Christ is, and where holy Christ comes. They are at the well-head for holinesse, which have holy Christ with their spirits.

They

They that have Christ with their spirits, are in the ready way to the very height of heavenly wisdome as Christ is. With him are all the treasures of wisdome. He that lyes in thy bosome, teaching thee wisedome secretly, came out of the very bosome of the Almighty, and knows all things; and he gives such an unction to that Spirit which he teaches, that he makes it know and discern all things too.

They that have Christ with their spirit are in the ready way to the very heighth of love, which is the glory of all graces in the sight of God and man; for there is no such worker and winner of love, as Christ is. If he do but *put in his finger by the hole of the doore*, he will make a mans bowels melt after him. If he do but reveal his love to our spirits a little, our spirits grow sick love unto him. He will wound us with one of his eyes, so full of beauty is he. Let a mans spirit be never so cold; yet if Christ be with it, he is in the ready way to burn with love to Christ as strong as death, which many waters cannot quench.

They that have Christ with their spirits are in the ready way to the very height of joy and consolation: they are in the ready way to joy *unspeakable and full of glory. These things have I spoken unto you*, &c. said Christ to his Disciples. Christ speaks such things to the spirits of those with whom he is present, as fils their spirits with joy, to the very brim; and this oft times in the very depth of all outward extremity. The Church doth darkly hint this. *The Comforter which should relieve my soul is far from me:* Lam. 1. 16. As if the Church had said, though my outward misery

be exceeding great, yet if the Comforter did but keep close to my spirit, I should have as much consolation as my heart could hold, in the midst of all my misery: but this is my misery, that the Comforter which should relieve my soul is farre from me, out of the hearing of sighs and grones, nay, out of the hearing of strong cries; *he is angry against my prayers.* In a word a Christian which hath Christ with his spirit, is in the ready way to *excell in virtue*; as *David* sayes, to excell in all virtue; to be wiser then his teachers, more excellent in all grace then his neighbours. And therefore to have Christ present with our spirits, must needs be counted and called *A prime and principall blessing.*

Lastly, to have Christ with our spirits, is the ready way unto eternall good; and therefore a principall blessing. As a stone carries with it whatsoever light thing be fastened to it, unto its own centre; so Christ whose proper place of residence is Heaven, carries with him thither, all such spirits as to whom he is united on earth. If we have a speciall friend at Court, we count that we are in a ready way to see all the pomp of the Prince. Christ hath the keyes of Heaven and Hell, he opens and no man shuts, shuts and no man can open: all with whose spirits he hath dwelt, and been kindly used upon earth, he knows; and when they shall knock at those everlasting gates, he will open and let them into every room in his royall dwelling, and shew them all the glory which he had with his Father before the world was, it is between Christ and that spirit with whom he lives, as between *Naomi* and *Ruth*, where

where the one lives the other will. Whileſt ſuch ſpirits live in the body, Chriſt will live with them there, when they remove out of the body, Chriſt will not leave them *(death cannot ſeparate)* but commands his Angels to bring them to eternall manſions with himſelf. Chriſt which is lifted up to glory himſelf, will draw up all ſuch unto him, as in whoſe ſpirits he dwells, and no ſtrength ſhall be able to withſtand him; none ſhall pluck ſuch out of his hand. *Unio cum Chriſto, eſt unio invincibilis.*

If to have Chriſt with our ſpirits be a grand favour, not to have him with our ſpirits, muſt needs be a grand evil. A ſpirit without Chriſt is naked, as a body without clothes. Many things may make clothing and defence for the body, but onely Chriſt that *beſt garment*, as the Father of the Prodigall calls him, can make clothing and munition for the ſoul. A mans ſpirit without Chriſt is as a naked body amongſt thorns, every thorn pierceth, and every briar ſcratcheth, and fetcheth bloud from ſuch a body; ſo worldly cares and worldly fears, when ſtrong, will pierce ſuch a naked ſpirit through and through, and make him run mad, if God (unſought) do not ſeaſonably ſtep in and bridle the Bedlam. A mans ſpirit without Chriſt, is as a naked body amongſt Serpents; every ſerpent ſtings and venoms ſuch a naked body to death; ſo every ſeed of the Serpent ſtings and poyſons to death ſuch naked ſouls by their threatnings, flatteries, examples, and the like: a mans ſpirit without Chriſt, is as a naked body in great blaſts of lightning; ſuch bodies are ſuddenly ſcorcht and conſumed; ſo ſuch naked ſouls are

ſuddenly blaſted, by the fiery darts of the Divell, and ſo ſuddenly oft times go from burning to burning; from burning in ſinne, to burning in Hell.

A mans ſpirit without Chriſt is not onely naked, but blind too. A naked man having his ſight, may make ſome ſhift; but a man naked and blind too, is in a miſerable helpleſſe ſtate indeed: and juſt ſuch is the ſtate and condition of every mans ſpirit, that hath not Chriſt with it: for as the Sunne in the Heavens is the eye and light of the greater world; ſo the Sunne of righteouſneſſe Chriſt, is the eye and light of the leſſer world, man. Now do but imagine what a dark dolorous condition we ſhould all be in, if the Sun were darkened or had utterly forſaken our Horizon; or do but think of that darkneſſe, which was upon the Egyptians for a little time, when no man could ſtir out of his place; and ſuch and much worſe is the dark dolorous condition of a ſpirit without Chriſt, not able to ſee the leaſt beam of ſaving light, not able to ſtir a ſtep out of his place, in the way that leads to life.

A mans ſpirit without Chriſt is not onely blind, but dumb too. A man that is blind, yet if he can ſpeak, can beg for that which he cannot ſee to work for. But when a man is blind, and dumb too, that he can neither help himſelf, nor beg of others, he is in a dolefull condition indeed; and juſt ſuch is the condition of every mans ſpirit that hath not Chriſt with it. For as Chriſt is Eyes to the ſoul, ſo he is a Mouth and Tongue, enabling to cry *Abba Father*. Unleſſe the ſpirit of Chriſt be with our ſpirits, helping our infirmities who are godly, we are dumb, and not able to ſpeak to our

own

own Father, as adopted children for daily bread, much more unable to beg for life, to the dreadfull Judge of all the world, muſt all ungodly perſons needs be, whoſe ſpirits are altogether without Chriſt, as an helper. I would have all men that live in their ſinnes, think ſeriouſly of this; when Chriſt as the dreadfull Judge of all the world at the great day ſhall ask you, what you have to ſay for your ſelves, that you ſhould not eternally die for your ſinnes, in which you have lived, you will be like that man which was without his wedding garment, dumb and not able to ſay a word for your ſelves: becauſe Chriſt is not with your ſpirits. It is impoſſible that a mans own guilty ſpirit ſhould be able to look the terrible Judge of men and Divels in the face, much leſſe ſpeak a word for mercy, unleſſe the almighty ſpirit of Chriſt be with it, to aid it. Many ignorant wretches ſooth themſelves with this, that they will at laſt cry, Lord, Lord, and ſo prevail quickly for pardon with him, who is infinite in mercy, Why, but think on this, O ignorant ſoul, *No man can call Jeſus, Lord, but by the Holy Ghoſt.* Thou wilt not in thy greateſt need be able to cry Lord, Lord, unleſſe the Lord be with thy ſpirit. Death will ſting thee, conſcience will gnaw thee, Chriſt will condemn thee, Divels will tear thee, and yet wilt not thou be able to cry, Lord, Lord, have mercy on me, unleſſe the Lord be with thy ſpirit; but in ſtead of crying, Lord, Lord, for mercy, thou wilt burn in malice againſt the Lord, and curſe and blaſpheme as Divels and damned wretches do. Haſt thou never ſeen condemned wretches, not onely dumb, but withall, deſperate too, and leap of the ladder

themselves, without either asking God or man forgivenesse? Thus in a spirituall sense; and much worse wilt thou do in the great day of judgement, for as much as Christ is not with thy spirit.

Fourthly, a mans spirit without Christ is not onely blind and dumb but deaf too. And if a man be blind and dumb, yet if he can heare, he may make some shift to help himself: we follow a thing (we know) sometimes by the sound, when we cannot see it, nor speak what it is: but when a man is naked, blind, dumb, and deaf too, he is in a helplesse condition indeed; and just such is the state of a mans spirit without Christ. For Christ, as he is Eyes and Toung, so he is Eares also to the soul of man. Hence it is that *John* speaks so frequently of spirituall hearing, after an *Hypothetical* manner: *He that hath an eare*, &c. That is, if any man have spirituall discerning, *Let him heare what the Spirit saith to the Churches.* Intimating that a spirituall eare is a very rare thing to be found, that which no man hath, but he which hath Christ with his spirit, that hath had his eares *bored* by the Spirit of Christ, as the Scripture speaks; all others are as deaf as adders, and cannot heare the voice of the Charmer, charm he never so wisely. I would have all that live in their sinnes, seriously consider this too, as a further degree of unhappinesse. You tell us that you will turn from your sins hereafter, and obey the call of God in the Ministery of his Word: but let me ask you this; Have you not hitherto turned the deaf eare upon God? Yes: I and so you will do for the time to come, and the reason of both is the same; because Christ is not with your spirits.

Let

Let mercies call, corrections call, let friends call, father call, mother call, husband call, wife call, let Miniſters call, conſcience call; nay, let Chriſt himſelf call, in what voice he will, ſtill voice or loud voice, in words never ſo pleaſing or never ſo piercing, yet wilt not thou heare, becauſe Chriſt is not with thy ſpirit; but with *Solomons* fool wilt on in thy ſinnes, and be eternally puniſhed.

Fifthly, a mans ſpirit without Chriſt is without *feeling*, in a dead palſie all over, which, how dolorous ſuch a ſtate is, in a corporall ſenſe, you know; much more dolorous in a ſpirituall ſenſe, I am ſure. As the ſpirit of man can neither ſee, ſpeak, nor heare, ſo neither can it feel without the Spirit of Chriſt. The ſpirit of man without the Spirit of Chriſt is dead. Chriſt is to our ſpirits, as our ſpirits are unto our bodies, their life, and life is the principle of feeling: for the dead feel nothing. *When Chriſt which is our* [*life*] *ſhall appear*, &c. Where there is no Chriſt, there is no life, and where there is no life, there is no feeling. You know the Apoſtle ſpeaks of ſome that were *paſt feeling*, having *given themſelves over to laſciviouſneſſe, to work all uncleanneſſe with greedineſſe.* There the Apoſtle ſpeaks of ſuch a ſenſeleſſeneſſe, as lies upon the ſoul by a ſecond act of divine juſtice. All humane ſpirits by the firſt act of divine juſtice upon *Adam*, are naturally paſt feeling, and would give up themſelves unto all wickedneſſe with greedineſſe, did not God reſtrain. To be paſt feeling in this latter ſenſe, notes principally a want of divine affection; when ſinne doth not kindly affect the ſoul with ſorrow, as in the former ſenſe, when ſinne doth not at all affect the ſoul with

ſorrow: when holy wayes and works do not kindly affect the ſoul with joy; as in the other ſenſe, when they do not affect the ſoul with joy at all; but rather diſturb and provoke to paſſion and malice:

I would have all that live in their ſinnes, ſeriouſly think on this alſo, as a further degree of unhappineſſe. You have heard many powerfull Sermons, which you have ſeen work admirably upon others, and yet they have made no impreſſion upon your ſpirits; and many hundred more may you hear, and no divine impreſſion at laſt be made, and the reaſon of both one and the ſame, becauſe Chriſt is not with your ſpirits; and by reaſon of this, your hearts are as Adamants, which every ſtroke hardens, but not breaks it. Let the maſter ſmite, and the man ſmite, let God ſmite, and his Miniſter ſmite, and conſcience ſmite, nay, let every member of the body be ſmitten with puniſhment, to affect the ſoul with ſinne, yet will it not ſtirre and complain, unleſſe Chriſt be with it.

Finally, a mans ſpirit without Chriſt, is without taſting or ſmelling: to theſe ſenſes alſo (you know) the Scripture doth allude, and therefore fitly here may I, to ſet forth fully the unhappy condition of every ſpirit without Chriſt. You know the Apoſtle ſpeaks of ſome *that ſavoured not the things of God*; which is a tearm applyed in Scripture to the ſenſe of ſmelling, as well as to the ſenſe of taſting, and therefore for brevity ſake do I here joyn both ſenſes together, in a ſpirituall way of alluſion. Why, all that have not Chriſt with their ſpirits, are ſuch as cannot rightly *ſavour ſpirituall things*; ſuch *put bitter for ſweet, and ſweet for bitter.*

I would have all you that live in your ſinnes, ſeriouſly think on this too, as a further degree of unhappineſſe. You come oft times to Wiſdomes home, and though ſhe prepare you all ſpirituall dainties, yet you can reliſh nothing but ſome by things, that lie about the diſh, rather for ornament then for food. And would you know the reaſon of this? it is becauſe Chriſt is not with your ſpirits. If Chriſt were with you, you would feed on every diſh at Wiſdomes table, on promiſes, yea, and on threatnings too: *To the hungry ſoul every bitter thing is ſweet*, ſaith *Solomon*. All that is good and wholeſome goes down well, where Chriſt is with the ſpirit. You come frequently to Wiſdomes houſe, who keeps a Table here and it were for a King, and yet you have lean ſhrivel'd ſouls, like men in a conſumption: every one tells you, that you look as if you were ſtarved, ſpeak and live, as if you never heard a good Sermon from years end to years end: they tell you that you are ſo lean and feeble, that you need the benefit of all the ſpirits, that every diſh at Wiſdomes table can yield, to ſtrengthen you and recover you, and yet every diſh almoſt goes againſt your ſtomacks; and that you do eat, is without ſavour or any other virtue, and ſo you languiſh with all dainties before you; and thus you will go on languiſhing, untill you quite conſume and periſh eternally, unleſſe Chriſt be with your ſpirits.

You ſee (I ſuppoſe) plainly by this time, that as it is a prime and principall happineſſe to have Chriſt with our ſpirits; ſo it is a prime and principall evil and unhappineſſe not to have Chriſt with our ſpirits. Wherefore having laid open both before

before you, let me entreat you all to look in upon your ſpirits, and ſee who keeps company with them Chriſt or the devil; one of theſe two is with all our ſpirits. If Chriſt be not with our ſpirits, the devil is and will be. If Chriſt be with your ſpirits, according to the ſenſe and meaning of the Apoſtle in my text, you ſhall find it by theſe two things, *the body is dead becauſe of ſinne, and the ſpirit is life becauſe of righteouſneſſe.* It is *Pauls* Character of Chriſts ſpeciall preſence in the ſoul of man upon earth, and therefore of ſtrong authority. *And if Chriſt be in you, the body is dead becauſe of ſinnes, but the ſpirit is life becauſe of righteouſneſſe*, Rom. 8. 10. The body is dead becauſe of ſinne; that is, the body of corruption is deſtroyed, as in reſpect of the guilt of it, ſo in reſpect of the dominion of it. And *the ſpirit is life becauſe of righteouſneſſe:* that is, the regenerate part is *vigorous*, in reference to all righteous wayes.

And if therefore you would know whether Chriſt be with your ſpirits, ſee whether your bodies be dead becauſe of ſinne: whether you labour to bring *every thought into ſubjection to Chriſt*; or whether you do not *allow* your ſelves liberty to ſome evil, out of love to ſome pleaſure or profit, which is that principally, wherein the dominion of ſinne conſiſteth, as *Paul* hints unto us, where he ſaith, *The evil which I do, I allow not.* That is, I do not approve of it in my heart, nor plead for it with my tongue, but ſtrive againſt it with all my ſtrength; and it would be more joy to me to be rid of it, then if I had a Kingdome conferred to me. This is the language right of one that hath Chriſt with his ſpirit.

Secondly,

Secondly ſee whether your *ſpirits be alive be-*
uſe of righteouſneſſe, if you would know whether
Chriſt be with your ſpirits or not, ſee whether ho-
y wayes do heartily affect you. I rejoyced when
hey ſaid, Come let us go to the houſe of the Lord,
ith the *Pſalmiſt*. He ſpake like a man, having
Chriſt indeed in his ſpirit: his ſpirit leapt within
im, like the babe in *Elizabeths* womb, when
hey ſpake of drawing near to God in the duties
f his worſhip. A Chriſtian that hath Chriſt with
is ſpirit, ſees a taking tranſcendent beauty in all
Wiſdomes wayes; *they are all wayes of pleaſure,*
nd paths of peace; which is ſpoken in reference to
uch as have Chriſt with their ſpirits; for others
ind no ſuch thing in them. And his ſpirit opens in
hem like flowers in the Sunne, and ſmells fra-
rantly, he bends and cleaves to them, in love to
hat ſouls ſweetneſſe, which he finds in them. And
f you find theſe things in you, I think I may ſafely
ell you to your comfort, that Chriſt is with your
ſpirits.

I may turn this Character into another form, as
Paul doth, and tell you in his words, that *he which*
is joyned to the Lord is one ſpirit, 1. Cor. 6. 17. They
that have Chriſt with their ſpirits, are one ſpirit
with Chriſt. This expreſſion (I conceive) is ſome-
thing explained by theſe following words; *And the*
multitude of them that believed, were of one heart
and one ſoul, Acts 4. 32. or as the originall hath it,
καρδία καὶ ψυχὴ μία, *heart and ſoul one*: They
that have Chriſt with their ſpirits, are heart and
ſoul one with Chriſt. They do *idem velle, & idem*
nolle: What Chriſt loves they love, and what
Chriſt hates they hate. Chriſt loves righteouſneſſe,
and

and hates inquiry: *Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity*, &c. Psal.45.7. They that have Christ with their spirits, are heart and soul one with Christ in this. They love righteousness, that is, all righteous wayes, and hate iniquity, that is, all that Gods word condemns. It was Christs meat and drink, to do his Fathers will; they that have Christ with their spirits, are one spirit with Christ in this. *It is joy to the just to do judgement*, saith *Solomon*. Christ was tender about keeping the least Commandment, as well as about keeping the greatest. *Whosoever shall break one of the least Commandements, and teach men so, he shall be called the least in the Kingdom of heaven*, Mat.5.19. They that have Christ with their spirits, are heart and soul one with Christ in this, they are tender to keep all Gods Commandments, least, as well as greatest. *So shall I not be confounded, whilst I have respect unto all thy Commandments*, saith *David*. I do not conceive the place fore-cited so, as if Christ did account one part of his Fathers will above another: I rather think that he there speaks *Phariseorum more*, in the Pharisees dialect, who would make the world believe, that they mightily laboured to keep some precepts, but others they thought, as many of us now do, that they need not to be so strict about. Now Christs tender Spirit for his Fathers honour, could not brook this halting in Religion; and they that have Christ with their spirits, are heart and soul one with Christ in this. That Commandment which the most say is one of the *least*, and may be dispensed withall; or at least need not to be so strictly lookt unto, that,

well as any other, whileſt a precious part of Chriſts will, a man that hath Chriſt with his ſpirit, will be tender to obſerve. *Davids* ſpirit ſmote him, for cutting off the lap of *Sauls* garment, as well as for cutting of the life of *Uriah*; which plainly ſhews, that men which have Chriſt with their ſpirits, are tender about the avoiding of ſmall ſinnes, as well as great.

Now poſſibly ſome of you by what hath been ſaid, may ſee, that as yet you have not Chriſt with your ſpirits; I ſhall addreſſe my ſelf in the firſt place particularly to ſpeak to you, and then in the ſecond place, I ſhall addreſſe my ſelf particularly to ſpeak to ſuch of you, as have by what hath been ſaid, diſcerned that Chriſt is indeed with your ſpirits. To you which by what hath been ſaid, ſee, that as yet Chriſt is not with your ſpirits; I have onely theſe two things to ſay, labour to bewail your great want, as perſons deeply enſible of it; and then labour to get this great want ſpeedily ſupplyed.

Firſt, labour to bewail your great want, as perſons deeply affected with it. It is the greateſt want in the world, to want Chriſt to be with a mans ſpirit. Other wants may be afflicting wants, but this is a damning want. Other wants may make thee deſpiſed of men, but this want will make thee for ever to be abhorred of God. Thou were better want riches, thou were better want honours, nay, thou were better want bread to put in thy head, then want Chriſt to be in thy heart. Thou were better want thy dear Husband, thy ſweet Wife to lie in thy boſome, then want Chriſt to lie there. Nay, thy ſoul were better

ter to be without thy body, then without Christ. If there be any want under heaven, that makes hell to man upon earth, it is this, to want Christ to be with his spirit. For what is it that makes hell, hell? a place full of sinne, and full of misery, but this, that Christ is not with those spirits: they are spirits everlastingly excluded from all communion with Christ. Now whereas great wants mak you complain heavily, and mourn bitterly, I beg the Lord to make these things sink into your spirits, that you may be sensible of this great want of wants, that your spirits are without Christ, and so without God in this world; that so all sorrow for others wants may meet and run in one channell, to bewail this great want. *Sauls* speech to his servant, I may here fitly allude to. *Come let us return* (said he) *least my Father leave caring for the Asses, and take thought for us.* If you that mourn for this want and that want, did but feel the want of Christ with your spirits, you would with *Kish* quickly leave mourning for trifles, and begin to mourn for things of weight. Come, O my soul, cease mourning for father and mother; cease mourning for husband and wife, for children and substance, and begin to mourn for this that thou yet livest Christlesse, and art in the ready way to die and perish remedilesse.

When yon have got your hearts to bleed inwardly, under your great want, then crie mightily to the Lord, and supply it. And to make your prayers prevalent, urge the promise of God, wherein he hath engaged himself to do good in Christ, to them that are *afarre off*. Thy soul thou findest farre off from Christ, why, the promise (saith

ſaith the Apoſtle) of Chriſt and ſalvation by him is to ſuch. *For the promiſe is to you and to your children, and to all that are* [*afarre of.*] This *Peter* ſpake by way of comfort, as now I do, to ſuch as felt their ſpirits without Chriſt, without grace and hope of glory. Chriſt you ſee is under a generall promiſe, and therefore no ſoul ſhould deſpair of obtaining him. He is promiſed to the Jews, and not onely to them, but to us Gentiles, who *ſometimes were afarre off*, not to this Gentile or that, but to all that are prickt in heart for the want of him. *For the promiſe is to you and to your children, and to all that are afarre off.* Let every one therefore upon this ground, that feels his ſpirit prickt and wounded for want of Chriſt, take words to himſelf, and go unto God, and ſay.

O God, my ſoul is a poore Chriſtleſſe ſoul, I find by wofull experience, that the Lord Jeſus is not with my ſpirit, by reaſon of which I live wickedly to thy diſhonour, and ſhall I know not how ſoon, die miſerably, to mine own eternall undoing, if thou do not ſhew mercy upon me, according to thy promiſe. Thou haſt ſaid that thou wilt beſtow Chriſt, grace and ſalvation upon them that are afarre off; make good thy gracious promiſe to me, whoſe ſpirit is farre from Chriſt, grace and all good; ſo ſhalt thou oblige me for ever unto thee, and I ſhall tell of thy goodneſſe as long as I live.

Having thus ſpoken what I thought fit, to ſuch as find by what was formerly delivered, that Chriſt is not with their ſpirits; I ſhall in the next place ſpeak unto you, that by what was formerly delivered

delivered, find that Christ is with your spirits. Something by way of counsell, and something by way of consolation I have to deliver unto you. Three things by way of counsell I would commend unto you: *thankfully acknowledge this great favour, carefully preserve it, and industriously labour to augment it.*

First, thankfully acknowledge this great favour. It is a pearl of great price, that God hath cast into thy bosome, to give Christ to be with thy spirit: and for great favours, every one will acknowledge it very fit and just, that they should be thankfull. It is a jewel that Christ scarce gives to one of ten thousand: and for rare gifts, every one will readily confesse it to be great ingratitude, not thankfully to acknowledge them. Doest thou not hear some swear, some curse, some lie, like their father the Divel? Why, thou wouldest have been such an one, had not God given Christ to be with thy spirit. Doest thou not see some drunkards, some whoremasters, some murderers, some persecutours of the Saints? Why, thou wouldest have been such an one, if God had not given Christ to be with thy spirit. Doest thou not see some make a god of their belly, some make a god of their wealth, some proud, some mad, some putting farre from them the evil day, living as if they should never dye? Why, thou wouldest have been such an one, had not God given Christ to be with thy spirit. Doest thou not see some *Nabals*, some *Jezabels*, some *Cains*, some *Demas's*, some *Judases*? Why, amongst the number of these wouldest thou have been, had not God given Christ to be with thy spirit. Wherefore, magnifie the Lord with all

all thy might, and let all that is within thee praiſe his holy Name. Thinke but how it was with thee, when thy ſpirit was without Chriſt. How *fooliſh thou waſt ſerving divers luſts* : how the God of this world which rules mightily in the children of diſobedience, did rule mightily in thee. How weak thy ſpirit was, and eaſily overcome and carried captive of every luſt. How drunken thy ſpirit was and reel'd from one opinion to another; one day thou thought'ſt thus and thus, and another day thou thought'ſt quite contrary. I ſay, do but think of theſe things and how the Lord might juſtly have left thee ſtill, to have gone on thus, untill thou hadſt periſhed, as hee hath done many thouſands, and then be unthankfull for the communion of Chriſt with thy ſpirit, if thou canſt. It was this conſideration that ſet *Paul* a wondering at the goodneſſe of the Lord. *I was a blaſphemer, a perſecutour, &c. yet I obtained mercy.* Hee circumflexes this terme [*I*] *yet* [*I*] *obtained mercy, &c.* It was wonderfull in his eye, that God ſhould give Chriſt to dwell with ſuch a bloudy blaſpheming ſpirit, as he had. In this way let us goe to work, to raiſe our dull ſpirits, to magnifie the free goodneſſe of the Lord: for 'tis a work of all works, that God loves : I was a man of a very proud, paſſionate, malicious, uncleane ſpirit; and yet I obtained mercy. God hath given Chriſt to be with this depraved ſpirit, and in a little time hee hath done very much, and made a manifeſt change in my ſpirit : of very proud he hath made it in ſome meaſure humble; of very paſſionate in ſome meaſure patient; of very malicious, in ſome meaſure loving; of very uncleane, in ſome meaſure con-

tinent. O! the rich of his love *how unsearchable is his mercy, and his love past finding out?*

Secondly, as I would have you thankfully acknowledge this great favour, so I would have you carefully labour to preserve it. You find that you have Christ with your spirits, take heed you do not lose him. Thou wert better lose thy life, than lose the speciall presence of Christ with thy spirit. 'Tis a prime and principall blessing as thou hast heard; a blessing of more than this world; nay, of more worth than thy soule, which Christ values above the world. Now choyce things, wee are usually very carefull of, and keepe them choycely. Christ totally (I know) can no man lose, which hath him after a speciall manner present with his spirit: but according to some prime and principall operations, he may: according to others, very farre though not totally. A man may lose the presence of Christ with his spirit totally, as a Comforter. *The Comforter which should releeve my soule, is far from me* saith *Ieremiah* Lam. 1. 16. in the person of the afflicted Church. 'Tis probable enough, that *Davids* spirit was thus stript of Christ by his dolorous complaints, which frequently we read of. *Is his mercy cleane gone for ever? doth his promise faile for euermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath hee in anger shut up his tender mercies? Will the Lord cast off for ever? and will he be favourable no more?* Psal 77. 7. 8 9. Some carriages in Christians towards Christ make Christ totally alter his carriage towards them; though for his Promise sake, hee will never totally remove himselfe from them.

As when Christians doe not keep their watch strictly

ſtrictly againſt ſin, in all the occaſions of it; then Chriſt, in ſtead of being a Comforter, becomes a convincer; and in ſtead of ſpeaking ſweet things, he ſpeaks very bitter unto the ſoule. This was the caſe of *David* and *Peter*. Or when Chriſtians are careleſſe, and ſluggiſh, to maintain and encreaſe their ſweet communion with Chriſt, unyeelding to the ſweet motions of the ſpirit of Chriſt, and turning oft times the deafe eare againſt the ſtill voyce behind them, which ſaith, *this is the way walke in it.* There Chriſt drawes a curtaine betweene the ſpirit of man and himſelfe, and leaves the ſpirit of man in the dark, and full of feares. This is notably illuſtrated by that language of the Spouſe, *It is the voyce of my Beloved that knocketh, ſaying; Open to mee, my Siſter, my Love, my Dove my undefiled: for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night.* The Church was convinced of this, that it was her Beloved ſeeking neerer communion with her, and yet obſerve how ſhe replyes. *I have put off my coat, how ſhall I put it on? I have waſhed my feet, how ſhall I defile them; I opened to my beloved, but my Beloved had withdrawne himſelfe and was gone; my ſoule failed when he ſpake; I ſought him, but I could not find him: I called him, but he gave me no anſwer:* Cant 5. You that find the preſence of Chriſt with your ſpirits, as a Comforter, make Chriſtian uſe of what I have ſaid, that you may ſtill enjoy ſo great a mercy. And if you loſe the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, as a Comforter to your ſpirits, miſerable comforters will all other things prove unto you. You will mourne, and none will be able to comfort you, if Chriſt as a Comforter forſake your ſpirits.

Secondly, as a leader, a man may be very far loſe the communion of Chriſt with his ſpirit. As if a Chriſtian take liberty to ſin againſt that light, which Chriſt hath ſet up in his ſpirit; this will make Chriſt firſt or laſt (if not timely lookt unto) leave a man to his owne underſtanding, to ſteere his courſe; and then will ſuch a man declare himſelfe quickly, to be a foole and a beaſt, in many points, as *David* ſaith, Have you not ſeene Chriſtians of great light erre in judgement, and erre in practice? Whence comes this weakneſſe, but from hence, that Chriſt as a leader ſtands aloofe from their ſpirits? which is a plaine demonſtration that a man may loſe the preſence Chriſt with his ſpirit, an a leader. *David* (I beleeve) found the truth of this, as well as of the former, by wofull experience. A man may collect ſo much cleerly, from his own words. *Caſt me not away from thy preſence, and take not thy holy ſpirit from me*: Pſal. 5. 11. The ſpirit of God is therefore called by *David* a *holy* Spirit, becauſe holy in himſelfe (the Spirit of the holy God, as hee ſaid to *Daniel*) but principally heere, as I conceive, *Ab officio*: becauſe the worker of holineſſe in us, *David* doubtleſſe by his fall, found an exceeding weakneſſe in his Spirit, unto all good ever what formerly hee did, and ſtrong propenſitie again to erre; as every act of ſin leaves ſeed and ſpawn upon the ſpirit, to bring forth more, to cover the firſt, or to commit the like againe. But more then all this; hee found Chriſt to ſtand aloofe from his ſpirit; not exerciſing that ſpeciall dominion in his ſpirit, as before, for the ſubduing of luſt, and ſuggeſting of holy motions and deſires; but leaving him

him as it were to himſelfe, as one with whom hee would have no more to do. And therefore doth *David* ſo dolefully complaine, *Caſt mee not away from thy preſence and take not thy* [*holy*] *Spirit from mee*: you therefore which finde Chriſt with your ſpirits, as a tender leader, take heed of ſinning againſt any part of that light, which he ſets up in your underſtandings, or againſt any motions of his ſpirit, which he ſuggeſts unto you; leſt he leave you to your owne light and to your own ſtrength: and then will you run from leſſe ſins to greater, from one ſinne to another, like *David* and *Peter*, to the ſcandalizing of the Goſpel, and the deſperate wounding of your own ſouls.

The third and laſt thing that I would commend unto you, by way of counſell, is this: labour to augment this great favour. You find Chriſt with your ſpirits, labour induſtriouſly, to have Chriſt more and more with your ſpirits. 'Tis a prime and principall bleſſing as you have heard, to have Chriſt with your ſpirits; therefore labour to get as much of this favour and happineſſe as poſſibly you can. Thou haſt Chriſt with thy ſpirit as a teacher; why thou maiſt have him yet more intimate with thee, and open unto thee, in imparting divine myſteries, if thou *follow on to know*, as the Prophet ſpeaks, if thou humbly forget, and looke over all thou haſt, and preſſe hard after more: the things thou knoweſt not, Chriſt will teach thy ſpirit, morning by morning, as by the learned Chriſt hath tanght thy ſpirit many truths, why, he will *lead thy ſpirit into all truth*, if thou urge his promiſe and beleeve. He will *fill thee with the knowledge of his will in all wiſdome and ſpirituall*

understanding, If thou pray for it as *Paul* did for the *Coloſſians*.

Thou findeſt Chriſt with thy ſpirit as a Comforter; why thou maiſt have yet much more conſolation from him, if thou ſtudy to be more pliable to him. Thou haſt Chriſt diſtilling drops of conſolation into thy ſpirit now and then; why thou maiſt have Chriſt powring in flagons of love into thy ſoule, filling thee with joy unſpeakable and full of glory if thou bring thy ſpirit to be more lowly and meek; for ſuch find moſt *reſt to their ſoules*: if thou carefully keepe *comming to Chriſt ſtill* in every preſſure of ſpirit; for ſuch find moſt *eaſe*: that is renewing faith ſtill, as thou reneweſt thy ſinnes.

Thou findeſt Chriſt with thy ſpirit, as a quickner and ſtrengthner to duty; why thou maiſt find him yet more mighty with thy ſpirit this way, if thou powre out thy ſpirit often with *David* for quickning grace; and if thou more deny thine owne ſtrength, and caſt thy ſelfe more upon his. Could we but attaine *Pauls* height in ſelf-deniall, to be nothing in our ſelves (*though I am nothing* ſaith he) we ſhould find Chriſt glorioufly preſent ſtill with our ſpirits, and be more conſtant in zeal and ſtrength to every good worke, then we are, I conclude this thus, be ſo tractable to Chriſt, that thou maiſt with *Mary* win upon Chriſt ſtill; and think that thou canſt never be neer enough to him nor intimate enough with him; and this is the ready way, to have a heaven upon earth: for the more wee get Chriſt to be with our ſpirits, the more truly may we be ſaid to be in heaven.

The laſt thing that I have to ſay to you, that finde

find Christ with your spirits, is matter of consolation. Here is comfort for you against famine. When thy body wants food, Christ that is with thy spirit, will give that meat to eat; which the world knowes not of; so that when others repine, and *curse God and their King* in their extremity, as the Prophet speakes; thou shalt be patient in Prayer to him who can command Ravens to bring thee bread and flesh to feed on; and will rather then thou shalt starve if thy life may be more to his glory, then thy death.

Here's comfort for you against the sword. In the midst of all troubles and feares, Christ that is with thy spirit will bear thee up admirably. What is the face of an enemy to terrifie; if Christ be with thy spirit. What is the spoyling of thy goods? nay what is the spoyling of thy body? if Christ be with thy soule. A mountaine of misery, is but as a Mole-hill if Christ support thy spirit. To think of the Sword is a naked reference to flesh and blood, and so nothing is more terrible: but let us that feare the Lord think of it in reference to Christ that is with our spirits, and then wee shall not be troubled though we heare of warres and rumours of warres, no more then at the rumours of any other calamity.

Here is comfort for you against the Plague, which is here and there scattered in the kingdome. What is any disease to the body, if Christ be with thy soule? As the outward man decayeth, the inward man shall bee renewed daily, because Christ is with thy spirit. When thy body is full of paine, thy soule shall be full of comfort because Christ is with thy spirit. When thy body is sealed with

ſpots of death, thy ſoul ſhall be ſealed with the holy Ghoſt unto eternall life, becauſe Chriſt is with thy ſpirit. The Plague of the body is nothing if this plague of plagues be not upon the ſpirit, to wit, deſtitute of Chriſt.

Here is comfort for you againſt Perſecution. When men frowne upon thee without, Chriſt will ſmile upon thy ſpirit within; when men lade the outward man with reproaches, Chriſt will fill thy inward man with comforts: when men ſhut up thy body from the communion of Saints, Chriſt will give thy ſpirit a large freedome of communion with himſelf. When men ſtrike thy body, Chriſt will ſtroke thy ſoule: when men kill thy body, Chriſt will ſave thy ſoule. In a word, as the afflictions of Chriſt abound in thy body, ſo the conſolations of Chriſt ſhall abound in thy ſoule, becauſe Chriſt is with thy ſpirit. Name any miſery that is incident to man and here's comfort to be ſuckt out of this point, to oppoſe unto it. Finally in life, in death, and eternally after death, Chriſt that is with thy ſpirit will be gaine unto thee. Thy life hee will make comfortable; thy death hopefull; thy being after death eternally joyfull. Wherefore I will conclude my Sermon for the good of you, as Saint *Paul* doth his Epiſtle for the good of *Timothy*, *The Lord Ieſus Chriſt be your ſpirits.*

Trin-uni Deo gloria.

132/1.

FINIS.